international, film review

#### INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

#### A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

of the International Catholic Cinema Office (O. C. I. C.)
12, rue de l'Orme, Bruxelles 4, Belgium.

Edited in three languages: English, French, Spanish.

#### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Jean BERNARD (President of O. C. I. C.); John A.-V. BURKE (Great Britain); Leo LUNDERS (Belgium); Pierre GRÉGOIRE (Luxembourg); Charles REINERT (Switzerland).

#### GENERAL SECRETARY

André RUSZKOWSKI, 4, rue Martin de Thézillat, NEUILLY-sur-Seine, France.

#### PERMANENT EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENTS

R. ALAMO, Film Critic (Caracas, Venezuela); J. A. V. BURKE, Director, "Focus" (London, Great Britain); J. M. CANO, Film Critic, "Ecclesia" (Madrid, Spain); J. F. COELHO, Film Critic, "Jornal do Comercio" (Rio de Janeiro, Brasil); J. P. CHARTIER, Cineaste, Film Critic, "La Vie Intellectuelle" (Paris, France); M. ERTENSORO, Art Critic, "Últimas Noticias" (La Paz, Bolivia); D. FABBRI, Scriptwriter, Artistic advisor to "Ente dello Spettacolo" (Rome, Italy); J. FORTUIN, Film Editor, "Maasboode" (Rotterdam, Holland); P. GRÉGOIRE, Deputy, Film Editor, "Luxemburger Wort" (Luxembourg, Grand-Duchy); A. KOCHS, Director, "Bild- und Filmarbeit" (Cologne, Germany); V. LEAL, Editor, "Radio-Renascenca" (Lisbon, Portugal); J. LOPEZ HENAO, correspondent, "Noticias Católicas" (Medellin, Columbia); L. LUNDERS, Director, "Docio" (Brussels, Belgium); A. MARTINEZ (Asunción, Paraguay); W. H. MOORING, Film Editor, "The Tidings" (Los Angeles, USA); J. MORALES GOMEZ, Film Critic, "Semanario Católico" (La Habana, Cuba); F. NAVARRO IRVINE, President of Catholic Parents Association (Lima, Peru); R. OREIRO VAZQUEZ, Director, Morality Council (Montevideo, Uruguay); J. ORSINI, Director, "Ciné-Sélection" (Saigon, Indo-China); J. POTENZE, Art Critic, "Criterio" (Buenos-Aires, Argentina); T. M. PRYOR, Movie critic, "Osservatore Romano" (Vatican City); Ch. REINERT, Director, "Filmberater" (Zürich, Switzerland); M. RIVAS DEL CANTO, Director, Morality Council (Santiago de Chile, Chile); K. RUDOLF, Director, "Katholische Filmkommission" (Vienna, Austria); E. TRASLOSHEROS, President, Mexican Legion of Decency (Mexico City, Mexico); J. URARTE, Director, "Prensa Católica" (Quito, Equador).

#### RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSLATIONS

English version: J. A. V. BURKE; French version: J. P. CHARTIER; Spanish version: A. M. SAGI.

Printers: IMPRIMERIE ST. PAUL, SA., Rue Jean Origer 6-8, Luxembourg, Grand Duchy. Typography: Nico SCHNEIDER. Cover-design: DELFO.

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

Central Office: Yvonne De HEMPTINNE, General Secretary, O. C. I. C., 12, rue de l'Orme, Bruxelles (Belgium); Tel. 34-81-50. Accounts payable to: CCP Luxembourg, No 140-87; Bank: Banque Internationale à Luxembourg, Account No 5250.

#### National Representatives

ARGENTINA: Dr. Rojo Cárdenas, Gen. Secr. C. I. N. E., Av. Alvear 1042, Buenos Aires; BELGIUM: C. C. A. C., 10, rue de l'Orme, Bruxelles 4, CCP 7563.72; BRAZIL: Dep. Cinema y Teatro, Acâo Catolica Brasileira, Rua México 11, 16-0 and., Rio de Janeiro; CANADA: Service d'Abonnements Benoit Baril, 777, Ave. Stuart, Outremont, Montreal 8; CHILE: Libreria Cervantes, Santiago de Chile; FRANCE: Centre du Livre Français, 1, rue de la Visitation, Paris 7-e, CCP Paris, 5662.09; GREAT BRITAIN: The Manager, International Film Review, 20, Ovington Square, London S. W. 3; HOLLAND: Katholieke Filmaktie, 24, Nieuwstraat 's Hertogenbosch; ITALY: Centro Cattolico Cinematografico, Via della Conciliazione 10, Rome, and C. I. P., 89 A, Via Nazionale, Rome; LUXEMBOURG: Centre Catholique du Film et du Livre, 17, Place du Théâtre, Luxembourg, CCP. 128-80; MALTA: Film Section, Catholic Institute, Palazzo Carafa, La Vallette; MEXICO: Legion Mexicana de Decencia, Apartado 1060, México, D. F.; PARAGUAY: Alberto Martinez, c/o Acción Católica, Palma y Chile, Asunción; SPAIN: Confederación Católica Nacional de Padres de Familia, Manuel Silvela, 9, Madrid; SWITZER-LAND: "Der Filmberater", 13, Auf der Mauer, Zürich 1. Postscheck VIII 27842; UNITED STATES: J. Brubaker, 3300, Netherlands Ave., New York 63, N. Y.; URUGUAY: J. A. Corlazzoli, Cisplatina 1246 bis, Montevideo.

For all countries not mentioned, address inquiries to the Catholic national cinema office or to the Central Office at Brussels.

#### Yearly Subscription Rates (4 issues)

Great Britain, Ireland and the Dominions: £ 1. (single copies, 5/-); U. S. A., Canada: 4 Dollars (single copies, 1 Dol.); Switzerland: 15 Frs. (single copies, 4 Frs.); "Benelux" Counties: 150 Belgium Frs. (single copies, 40 B. Frs.); France: 900 French Frs. (single copies, 250 F. Frs.). For all others countries, a price has been arranged by agreement between the National representative for the country concerned and the Central Office.

#### CONTENTS

• • •	
OUR PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL L	IFE
The Cinema as Moral and Cultural Educator A Cinema Worthy of Christian Civilisation The Vatican among the pioneers of the Film The United Nations appreciate the importance of the Cinema	Louis MARIN Roger MILLOT Piero REGNOLI Jean BENOIT-LÉVY Ernest BORNEMAN
IN SEARCH OF A CHRISTIAN DOCT. OF THE FILM	RINE
Less Potent than Fire but more Powerful than the Printing Press! The Thomist Philosophy turns to the Cinema	Georges DAMAS Felix MORLION, O. P. A. R.
ROUND THE WORLD OF FILM	
United States.	
Hollywood Crisis, seen by our special correspondents.  I. Towards a new sense of moral responsibility  II. Hollywood turns its head  Aims of the Legion of Decency	Thomas M. PRYOR William H. MOORING Mrs. James F. LOORAM
A Great Picture: "JOAN OF ARC".  I. How it was produced  II. How it was welcomed  Orson WELLES, Immaterialist. A Profile	Paul DONCOEUR, S. J. William H. MOORING Jean De BONGNIE
Latin America.	
The Plot: main weakness of the Argentine Film  The Cinema in Brazil.  The Venise Festival	Jaime POTENZE José Francisco COELHO JOHANÈS
FILM PANORAMA	
by our permanent Editorial Corresponder	nts.
INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS	
The Film in American Education	Floyde E. BROOKER Pierre FAURE, S. J.
THE CHILDREN AT THE CINEM	A
Essential elements of a capital problem	
TECHNIQUES THAT MAY REVOLUTI THE CINEMA	ONISE

#### CATHOLIC ENTERPRISES

Swiss Catholic Centre (Dr. Charles Reinert). — General Council meeting of the OCIC in Venice (Y. H.). — Pastoral Letter from the Uruguayan Hierarchy (R. O. V.). — Catholic Film Society, Great-Britain (J. A. V. Burke). — Renewal of Catholic Film action in Germany (Dr. Anton Kochs). — The Cinema enters the Paris Catholic Institute (a. r.). — A Catholic Film Institute in the Netherlands (J. P. Gribling). — Rev. P. Doncoeur, Chaplain of the Union Catholique du Cinéma (a. r.) — Abel Gance works on the "DIVINE TRAGEDY" (r.). — A Film on Vocation (r.). — The C.I.N.E. Group in Argentine (j. p.) — In memoriam Re. Fath. Danion. —

#### **ECHOS**

 $\textbf{Religious Films and the RANK Organisation (A. J. V. B.).} \\ -- \textbf{Parliament discusses Cinema at Montevideo (R. O. V.)} \\$ 

BOOKS, PERIODICALS



### UN FILM CAPTIVANT

est préparé jusque dans ses moindres détails. On pèse le pour et le contre, on évalue, on calcule. Et dans l'élaboration du film, la qualité de la pellicule est d'importance capitale.





TOUS LES ASPECTS DE LA

## Position Chrétienne devant l'Ecran

vous sont révélés par le livre capital

### "LES CATHOLIQUES PARLENT DU CINEMA"

BASÉ SUR LES RAPPORTS ET LES DÉBATS DU

IVE CONGRÈS CATHOLIQUE INTERNATIONAL DU CINÉMA

ORGANISÉ PAR L'OCIC A BRUXELLES

DU 16 AU 22 JUIN 1947

UN VOLUME DE 400 PAGES IN 80, AVEC ILLUSTRATIONS 100 FR. BELGES LES ÉDITIONS UNIVERSITAIRES, 163, RUE DU TRONE, BRUXELLES POUR LE TRANSPORT DE PASSAGERS ET DE MARCHANDISES

### NAVIERA AZNAR<sup>S</sup>

CASA CENTRAL - MAIN OFFICE - BUREAU CENTRAL

APARTADO 13

BILBAO

**ESPANA** 

SPAIN

**ESPAGNE** 

AGENCIAS EN LOS PRINCIPALES PUERTOS DEL MUNDO REGULAR LINES TO SOUTH, CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICAN



LUXEMBOURG - 4, RUE DE LA RENAISSANCE
Cable: RAMUVIN, Luxembourg — Téléphones 35-97 et 51-15

RECOMMANDE SES
VINS ET LIQUEURS
VINS CHAMPAGNISÉS
JUS DE FRUITS
SPARKLING WINE
WINES AND LIQUORS
FRUIT JUICE

# Praesens-Film & ZURICH

WEINBERGSTRASSE 15

MARIE-LOUISE
DERNIERE CHANCE
LES ANGES MARQUES
(THE SEARCH)

DE GRANDES DATES DANS L'HISTOIRE DU FILM AU SERVICE DE L'HUMANITÉ

#### The G.B. Film Strip Projector

The new G.B. Model 38 enables the teacher to get the best out of his film strips. It is a beautifully designed precision instrument, built for easy yet efficient operation—for quick change-over from film strip to slide projection.

The illumination system employs a low-voltage lamp which besides ensuring a considerable gain in light efficiency over higher-voltage lamps, is less liable to premature failure through handling or vibration. In conjunction with the triple condenser unit and "bloomed" objective lens, maximum and evenly distributed screen illumination is given.

The G. B. Film Strip Projector is compact, graceful, light in weight, yet robust. The entire equipment — projector, slide carrier, adaptor and spares — fits into a small carrying case. Made in moulded plastic and aluminium. An illustrated pramphlet describing the equipment may be obtained from

G. B. Equipments Limited, Imperial House, 80-82 Regent Street, London, W. 1.

From this address may also be obtained literature describing the new Bell & Howell-Gaumont 16 mm. Sound Film Projector, the latest and best classroom machine obtainable.

#### 300 G.B.I. Classroom Films

The Educational Catalogue of the G. B. Film Library lists the largest collection of sound and silent classroom films in the country. From this 16 mm library the teacher may obtain more than 300 films on most of the main subjects of the curriculum, dealing espacially with those lessons which are the most difficult to present through any other medium. Many of them are established classics.

The post-war films that are being added to the catalogue set higher standards still of teaching quality and technical excellence. The first to be completed won the special award at the International Film Festival at Brussels for the best teaching film. For the complete list of G. B. I. classroom films, and for any information and advice on the use of 16 mm. educational films, write to

The Education Division, G - B Instructional Ltd., Imperial House, 80-82 Regent Street, London, W. 1.

#### **G-B** Instructional Wall Charts

G. B. I. Wall Charts are spaciously designed in brilliant colours. They teach the child through his most receptive faculty and at his own speed of assimilation. They brighten the classroom and keep unobtrusively before the children good standards of taste, design and colour harmony. Like G. B. I. films and strips, each wall picture is under the supervision of a teacher expert. A list of the charts ready and in preparation will be sent to you on receipt of a card to

The Chart Section, G. B. I., Education Division, Imperial House, 80-82 Regent Street, London, W. 1.

## INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

NUMBER 1

1949

YEAR I

It is as a result of urgent requests from many quarters that we are, inspite of the difficulties of the times, undertaking the publication of this International Film Review.

The experience gained by Catholics during and after the war and the increasing importance of all modern methods of information and popular entertainment have drawn their attention more and more to the problems of the cinema.

Each country has its story of enterprise to add to programmes already in operation. To all these scattered groups, working for a cinema worthy of Christian civilisation, we offer information, instructive studies and a forum for free exchange of opinion.

Each should be in a position to benefit from the experience of all and the results of such efforts made available.

We are eager and anxious to be of service, not only to Catholics who are engaged in work for the cinema but to the industry as a whole. To all those philosophical, aesthetic, cultural, social and economic problems which the industry is called upon to solve, we should like to bring the impact of Christian thought and study, thus demonstrating clearly that no basic difference exists between their moral and material prosperity and the keen interest which the Church and its followers display towards the cinema. To understand better the aims and principles of the Catholic world in this connection is to afford the industry a greater means of furthering their own interests.

We need, on the other hand, to bring home to the Catholic intellectual the serious and complex character of certain aspects of the problem. We shall, therefore, seek the views of prominent Catholics on the present and future role of the Cinema in promoting art, science and literature. For our part, we shall try to impart what we have learned as result of our researches into the heart of the world of cinema. It seems to us to be essential to achieve a deep and structural understanding of the medium of film; to be able to weigh each new development of an invention, the scope of which may some day be hailed as greater even than that of the printing press.

Our ambition, therefore, is to become the link between the preceptors of the Church on the one hand, the artistic and commercial leaders of the industry on the other, between Catholicism and all those whose efforts are directed towards the elevation of the human mind. We wish to see the International Film Review become the instrument of all who are working for a better cinema; the forum in which may eventually be fashioned a true Christian philosophy of the motion picture, the broad outlines of which were drawn up by Pope Pius XI in the memorable Encyclical, Vigilanti Cura".

#### Louis MARIN

President of the CIDALC (Comité international de Diffusion Artistique, Littéraire et Scientifique par le Cinématographe). Member of the "Institut de France".

#### THE CINEMA

### AS MORAL AND CULTUREL EDUCATOR

CIDALC is an international committee which exists with the object of assisting the cause of education, morality, literature, the arts and sciences, by means of the cinema. It is, of the various international organisations interesting themselves in the workings of this astonishing invention, the first in the field. Some people think our objective is too narrow. True, it has its limitations; it is only secondarily concerned with the attitude of the general public towards the varied technical and commercial factors of this ubiquitous entertainment; nor is it excited by the attitude of the "highbrows" towards the streamlined perfection of a pass-time the production of which has become one of the major economic enterprises of our times. Such preoccupations have their galaxy of devoted followers and loyal supporters: our attitude towards the films however, arouses much less enthusiasm. It is, nevertheless, of capital importance, requires careful treatment and is bristling with difficulties.

Throughout history, the spiritual aspect of the activities of mankind, particularly those connected with material inventions, tends to be overlooked. True, there have been periods such as the Middle Ages when the Faith exercised a stronger stimulation than the desire for gain, was more engrossing than the satisfying of pleasure or ambition, seemed greater, even, than the legitimate joys of discovery and technical invention. But while these transitory pleasures are always capable of arousing both interest and the means of satisfying it, the spiritual still stands for what is most valuable in the life of the ordinary person, goodness, the absolute; it represents that enthusiasm, that sense of exaltation which most people have some time or other during their lives experienced. It demands, on the other hand, a detachement, a discipline, a striving towards the ideal which is not often found in everyday life.

The present age suffers from the fact that progress in the material sciences and the application of such progress seem to be in conflict. That is why there has been such an obvious transformation in our way of living these days, and, flowing from that fact, such an extraordinary change in our moral and social life. In revenge, as it were, the intellectual sciences, in spite of being able to make use of the most recent methods, in spite of the prodigious resources now at the disposal of reason, progress much more slowly. So slowly, ideed, that during the last two generations the equilibrium which should exist between these two categories of knowledge has been upset. A lack of equilibrium all the more tragic at a time, which seems crucial in the evolution of man, when during the past half-century, crisis after crisis has shaken States and individuals: the world itself; crises which are basically moral in character and the cure for which demands a reorientation of the conscience of mankind.

It is the Christian tradition which has nendet down the ideas of the universal and the eternal which people have. It is certain that Christianity will continue its function of succouring that Civilisation which, in the past, it has been the means of saving, extending, coordinating, embellishing. It will be found present on every part of that battle field where the forces of good and evil wage their unceasing combat. In this sector it is that CIDALC, our International Committee, will be found to have pushed its resistance efforts furthest.

Morality: in this connection the Christian precepts are so strongly imbedded in the consciousness of the Western world that even the most unbelieving offer it their obedience and consider conduct unreasonable and illogical without it.

Education: it is clearly the task of religion to safeguard behaviour; even more is it called upon to watch over the spiritual welfare of the young.

Literature and art, in which Christian thought and feeling have born such remarkable fruit since the beginning of our such history are still the most potent instruments for the shaping of consciences.

The Sciences which can become the most pernicious slaves when wielded purely for materialistic ends, open up the way to the highest aspirations of man when properly understood and used.

Between CIDALC and other Christian groups working for the same end, agreement is therefere perfect and we place complete confidence in the efforts of such organisations.

### A CINEMA WORTHY OF CHRISTIAN CIVILISATION

FROM its origin the "Mouvement International des Intellectuels Catholiques" (Catholic Intellectual Movement) set to work on the problems presented by the Cinema, and in this field they were naturally welcomed by the "Office Catholique International du Cinéma" (International Catholic Cinema Office) which has for a number of years conducted a campaign for a more Christian atmosphere in films.

Rapid agreement was reached between the M. I. I. C. and the O. C. I. C., and I welcome with great satisfaction a cooperation which makes the O. C. I. C. correspondent member of the M. I. I. C., specialised in film matters, thereby constituting an essential link between the Catholic intelligentsia and those producers who use the Cinema as their field of action. Film has long been considered a minor art, lacking in real interest, by many intellectuals who, paradoxically enough in view of its great influence on the masses, discount its appeal. The élite appear to believe that man's greatest spiritual joy, his highest inspiration and most exciting scientific research are the exclusive realm of a favoured few.

Fortunately, however, this attitude is beginning to lose favour amongst intellectuals who, and more especially the Catholics in their ranks, have so important a role to play in the world. It would be a form of treachery to abandon to indifferent hands and superficial minds the extraordinary power which the Cinema wields over the masses. In so intricate a matter it is much easier to state principles than to determine with any certainty their field of application. Two sides, however of the role of Catholic intellectuals are at once apparent. Firstly, the development of an interest in the Cinema and the arrival at an understanding of its rules and various specialised techniques, together with a realisation of its mani-

fold possibilities in the dissemination of ideas. This aspect of the question should claim the attention of all.

Secondly, and this applies to those who specialise in actual film work, the seeking of means of adapting the film ever more closely to the requirements of the mind, whilst at the same time adhering to the basic formulae of the art. They should bring to their work the conviction, imperative in the case of Catholic intellectuals, that their contribution to an art of such extraordinary potentialities and tremendous interest is an answer to a real vocation.

No matter which of these aspects appeals the more, the birth of a new Review, a concrete manifestation of the close union between the M.I.I.C. and the O.C.I.C., with the self-imposed mission of link between the general public and the industry, will be welcomed by all who realise the need for the introduction of Christ's message into circles where it is often forgotten and where Catholicism plays but an episodic part.

Already the production of two outstanding films, true to life and truly Christian, has been possible.

I hope they will be followed by many others, and I am convinced that the Review has a useful contribution to make.

### THE VATICAN

#### AMONG THE PIONEERS OF THE FILM

The advent of the cinema, with its enormous repercussions in the technical and spectacular spheres, did not fail to awaken a lively interest in the Pope's entourage. The role of interested onlooker did not suffice for long and, thanks to the help of private individuals close to Vatican, constructive activities were soon under way.

The first cine-camera was introduced into the capital by Baron K a n z l e r, son of General Kanzler, defender of Rome in 1870. With the assistance of the young Don Carlo Respighi — future Prefect of Pontifical Ceremonies, now lately deceased — it was successfully used in research into Christian archaeology, particulary in a study of the architecture of the Catacombs. A considerable number of films was produced, one of which, "THE MARTYR'S TOMB", can still be shown to-day, thanks to the excellence of its state of preservation.

At first sight this immediate interest of Vatican circles in the infant Cinema might appear surprising. It will, however, be easily understood by those who have noted the meticulous care with which the Holy See has followed all the manifestations of modern art. It is even said that the public which rushed to see the First Exhibition of futuristic paintings in the foyer of Rome's Costanzi Theatre was mainly composed of priests and members of the religious orders. This, at least, is what Umberto Boccioni declares in his book on futuristic painting.

The interest taken by the Vatican was not limited to benevolent contemplation of the phenomenon. A Vatican financier of the time, Ernest P a c e l l i, uncle of the present Sovereign Pontiff, put up the financial backing for the first Italian company, C i n e s. This organization subsequently took up a position, both technical and artistic, entirely independent of the wishes of its founder, whose work was strictly limited to the organization of the Society's finances.

The Holy Father's first official intervention in the realm of the Cinema occurred on June 29th, 1936, with the Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura". There had already been several salutary incursions by lesser authorities, notably the Bishops, who had denounced films which exalted immorality and vice. The Vatican, however, had not yet defined its position.

The Encyclical ,, Vigilanti Cura' was not addressed to the whole world, but only to the Hierarchy and faithful of the United States of America, who watched their own production reach its zenith during these years of feverish Hollywood activity.

Referring to the former Encyclical, "Divini Illius Magistri", which had already examined, amongst other things, certain aspects of the Cinema's influence on the Catholic spectator, His Holiness Pius XI recal-

led previous tokens of the Vatican's interest in this question. A code for the moral classification of films had been provisionally drawn up in March 1930. In August, 1934, the Holy Father had addressed an appeal to the F.I.PRES.CI. (International Federation of the Cinema Press) asking it to support the current efforts to create a moral cinema, efforts which became increasingly necessary as the technical progress and high artistic standard attained in the cinema endowed it with an ever growing influence over all classes of the population. At the same time, an appeal had to be made to all members of Catholic Action throughout the world to establish the basis of a single classification code which, while mindful of national and racial characteristics, would serve as a basic criterion for the whole world. Simultaneously the American L e g i o n o f D e c e n c y came into being. Its aim was to influence production and it drew up detailed rules for films destined for public showing.

The profound and inspired utterance of His Holiness P i u s X I gave approval to the assiduous efforts of all who were working to establish a morally healthy cinema. These true benefactors of humanity are refered to in the Sovereign Pontiff's concluding phrase:, They will win the approbation and approval of all right thinking men, Catholic and non-Catholic, and they will help to assure that a great international force—the motion picture—shall be directed towards the noble end of promoting the highest ideals and the truest standards of life".

From about 1938 onwards, permission to make films inside the Vatican State, either of its life or of its monuments and works of art, was sought with increasing frequency by various film organizations. The Vatican, fully alive to the moral and artistic benefits that the cinema can bestow, gave every assistance in the making of these films. As all internal industrial and commercial undertakings are by law reserved for the Vatican State, to the exclusion of private individual, and as these ventures all originated outside the City, it was decided to set up an official bureau to regularise the control of foreign productions undertaken within Vatican precincts. This was the origin, between 1945 and 1946, of the DO. CI. VA. Office (Documentazione Cinematografica Vaticana), under the Governor of the Vatican State. In actual fact, in order to avoid any interference with liberty of production, this office has never functioned.

Amongst extraneous productions devoted to Vatican matters mention must be made of Louis de Roch e-mont's "VATICAN CITY" (March of Time 1939); Orbis-Film's "PASTOR ANGE-LICUS" (1941); Pozzi Bellini's documentary "LO ZOO DI PIETRA", (Universalia, 1948) etc.

Meanwhile, thanks to the devoted and effective work of Canon Brohée, recently deceased, the foundations of the future O.C.I.C. (International Catholic Cinema Office) were laid towards the end of 1928. This is the office charged with the task of focussing Catholic Film Action, organising the information and education of cinema audiences all over the world, and encouraging the distribution of films of quality.

As this organization developed, the Holy Father's attention was drawn to the success achieved by Canon Brohée, who submitted four different reports on the results of his work, and his plans and hopes for the future. Finally, Vatican approval and gratitude were signified to the organization in a letter from the Holy Father dated February 18th, 1947, which contained words of encouragement and expressed the hope that its objective would shortly be attained.

The vigilance of the Holy Father has not ended there. He is ever watchful that in the cinema, as in other spheres, the expression of human genius shall be devoted to the building up of the highest ritual values.

## THE UNITED NATIONS

#### APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CINEMA

All students of the educational role of the cinema will be familiar with the name of Jean Benoit-Lévy, if not with his works. Many others have admired his feature films, especially the unforgettable "LA MATERNELLE", a new version of which has just been announced. Others again have read his writings, notably that work of high inspiration "THE GREAT MISSION OF THE CINEMA".

He has been head of the Films and Visual Information Department of the United Nations, for 2½ years, ever since its inception, and he grapples with enormous difficulties in this important position.

M. Benoit-Lévy is too busy to write an article for the Review, but he was good enough to give us an interview in which he discussed certain aspects of his work.

"Does the United Nations Organization intend to use the Cinema to further its aims?" was the first question we asked.

"Certainly, and proof positive of U.N.O's real interest lies in the choice of a veteran of the educational film like myself as head of the department concerned. For 25 years I have hoped that one day I should find an organization capable of helping the cinema to fulfil its international mission.

The League of Nations, which was responsible for much important achievement in other fields, did practically nothing in the realm of film.

U.N.O., on the other hand, from the very outset took a lively interest in the subject, and I was glad to accept the proffered position. It seems to me that at last I have found an institution whose nature and programme allow of practical achievement."

"How does U.N.O. set to work in the domain of film?"

"At the beginning we created a central organism called the Film Council of the United Nations. It is composed of "film" delegates from the Nations and from what are called the "Specialised Agencies", i. e. U.N.E.S.C.O. (U. N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), F.A.O. (Food and Agricultural Organization), I.L.O. (International Labour Organization), W.H.O. (World Health Organization), I.C.A.O. (International Civil Aviation Organization), I.T.O. (International Trade Organization), Bank

(International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), Fund (International Monetary Funds).

Thanks to this centralisation, co-ordination of the activities of the U. N. and of the special Agencies in the field of information and education trough film and other visual aids is made possible. Waste of time and money is precluded and the best use can be made of the available personnel. For instance, the executive Office includes personnel from the Department of Information in New York as well as the personnel of U.N.E.S.C.O. in Paris. It carries out the orders of the Council, with the clear understanding that the costs of any eventual production shall be borne by the organization initiating such production.

Having set up this international instrument, we are now striving to establish "National Cinema Committees for the United Nations" in as many countries as possible. Their function will be liaison between ourselves and the main body of the profession in every country.

It is our wish that producers and creative artists, distributors, exhibitors and film critics should be represented on such a Committee. Equally, they will be expected to mobilise the profession's intellectual and industrial resources for the furtherance of the essential aims of the United Nations: mutual understanding between men and peace between nations."

"Having created the instrument, how do you propose to use it?"

"We want to develop an international function for film, making use of three different methods.

Firstly, a series of prototype films with world distribution. The first series, of 12 films made in different countries, is either ready or actually in production now. Each of these films has a subbject of world interest.

#### Here is the list:

- 1) "THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER" 18 minutes about U.N.O., made under the auspices of U.N.O.
- 2) "THE RIGHT TO KNOW" 18 minutes made in the U.S.A. on "Freedom of Information".
- 3) "MAPS WE LIVE BY". 18 minutes in which the Canadian producers explain the importance of maps and cartography.

4) "FIRST STEPS" — a longer film (40 minutes) about the building of U.N.O.'s new home.

5) "THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLITERACY" -

entrusted to Mexico.

6) "THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZA-TION IN ACTION" - on the work of the International Save the Children funds. A Polish production.

7) "YOUNG IDEAS" — to be made by Czecho-

slovakia.

8) "COMMON GROUND", in which the British producers set out to prove the importance of identical studies in bringing about mutual understanding between the youth of different countries.

9) "JUVENILE DELINQUENCY"

Belgium will make.

- 10) "IN EVERY PORT" dealing with the well-being of Merchant Navy crews; produced in
  - 11) "LIGHTHOUSES" a French production.

12) "THE TIMBER PROBLEM" — a Swedish production.

There are also films produced by the Department of Information for the Department of Sociology, such as "FIRST STEPS", "MOTHER", "CHILDREN", "COMMUNITY".

So far as possible the distribution of these films in each country is effected trough commercial distributors, so that the cinema industry cannot suffer.

Our second method I see as the encouragement which the U.N. have it in their power to give to the production of films of world interest, dealing with one of the Charter's basic principles; for instance the maintenance of peace, tolerance between races, social questions, economic problems. Without giving away details, I can say that at the present moment I am doing my utmost to get the Council to sponsor a work which will be of very great value to the whole of mankind.\*)

Finally, the third method is even more direct help for the producers of factual films, in the shape of ideas for scenarios, suggestions, sometimes even material

"Dr. Laënnec" by Maurice Cloche has been sponsored by the Council (Editors Note).

help (raw film). My unceasing efforts in this direction are based on a firm conviction that documentary is the basis of all film and that it provides the only possible school for the cineastes of the future, with opportunity it gives of perfecting this method of

Nevertheless, if it is to carry out its task, the documentary film must rejoice in conditions which give everyone a chance, with the assurance that expenses will be covered, even if there is no fat living to be made. Then only will documentary production be able to dispense with orders which, whether from the Government, an association or an industry, prevent the work from being completely free and untram-

melled.

The exploitation of documentary depends mainly on the organization of its market; that there is such a market I am convinced. Much work and great patience will be needed before any organization can be created. We are faced with a long and exacting task which will not be crowned with success unless those mainly concerned, I mean the producers, give their full co-operation. They can, nevertheless, count on concrete support from the U. N., whose representatives are well aware that no Art can mark any progress without a background of minimum material security against which to develop.

If these ideas are to be spread troughout the world we need veritable missionaries who will go from country to country to study the situation and to make the heads of the film industry conscious of their responsibility. We have already made a start with visits of this kind, and the goodwill everywhere encountered

encourages us to continue.

We count too on help from the private, that is to say non-governmental, organizations anticipated in the United Nations Charter. The collaboration of organizations, such as the International Catholic Cinema Office, which are engaged in concrete activities and have a clearly specified field of action will be cordially welcomed. Up till now, however, none of the private international cinema organizations has obtained consultant status.'

> Ernest BORNEMAN Head of Film Unit, Projects Division Department of Mass Communication U.N.E.S.C.O

## THE UNESCO FILM ACTIVITIES

In 1948 the film activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation were handled by a number of film specialists attached to the three programme divisions of the Mass Communications Department — the Free Flow Division

which was set up to facilitate the flow of educational, scientific and cultural materials across national, social and economic barriers; the Technical Needs Division which was set up in 1946 to investigate the shortages in radio, press and film equipment in

war-damaged countries and other deficiency areas; and the Projects Division which was called into existence at Unesco's Second General Conference in 1947 for the purpose of initiating and influencing the production and distribution of films, broadcasts, books and articles on educational, scientific and cultural subjects.

#### TECHNICAL NEEDS DIVISION

In April 1947 nine field surveyors experienced in various aspects of film, radio and press work were engaged by Unesco on a short-term basis to make field enquiries into the state of these three media in twelve war-damaged countries - Belgium, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Poland and Yugoslavia. In September 1947 the Report of the Commission on Technical Needs was published as a first stage towards remedying such needs as had been revealed by the enquiry. By November 1947, when Unesco's Second General Conference opened in Mexico City, it had become obvious that other organisations would have to be consulted if the suggested remedies were to be made effective. The Member States therefore instructed the Director General "to explore the possibility of launching an appeal to public and private bodies and individuals to contribute to a fund to help war-devastated countries to reconstruct their media of mass communication, and to launch such an appeal if he is satisfied that it is likely to be successful." Simultaneously, the Conference voted to extend the survey in 1948 so as to cover a number of countries in Europe, Asia and America. By March, 1948, the second group of field surveyors had been selected and the choice of territories had been defined to include Austria, Burma, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Italy, Malaya, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Singapore, Uruguay and Venezuela. In August 1948 a second Commission of film, press and radio experts was called together in Paris to consider the findings of the field surveyors and, with the help of representatives from the countries under survey, to make recommendations for the alleviation of the needs that had been discovered. The printed report of the Commission was published in French and English in September 1948, and measures were immediately set in motion to give aid in accordance with the recommendations set forth.

These recommendations covered not only the needs of material and equipment but also those of skilled personnel, of film seminars and other training schemes, of audio-visual scholarships and of an exchange of film technicians between countries. Considerable stress was laid on the provision of mobile film units to countries with a high proportion of illiterates scattered in non-electrified villages; on the

need of producing local language versions of educational films, and on the urgency of providing cheaper 16 mm film projectors than those currently available.

In general the Commission confirmed its findings of the year before: that equipment shortages were caused by lack of hard currency rather than by a deficiency in the world's production capacity. Accordingly, the Commission approved Unesco's plan of setting up an international loan for cultural reconstruction, and of making arrangements whereby deficiency countries might receive the currency they need for the purchase of film equipment and in return provide, in their own currencies, film services of all possible kinds. Other recommendations included the setting up of an international relief fund to restore film, radio and press facilities in war-devasted countries, and the printing of a special Unesco stamp to raise funds for the same purpose.

On the question of providing scholarships, fellowships, travel grants and other types of assistance for film technicians and audio-visual educationists from deficiency countries, the Commission recommended that Unesco should enlarge all such facilities during the coming year and should at the same time create seminars for audio-visual educators on a regional basis during the year 1949. In 1948, twenty-four such fellowships were offered, either directly by Unesco or under Unesco sponsorship. Unesco itself offered one fellowship for six months' study in the field of film and radio education to each of the following Member States: Austria, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines and Poland. At the same time the British Film Producer's Association offered ten fellowships, each for eight month's study of British film production, to film directors from Belgium, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway and Poland. The Shell Petroleum Company in England simultaneously offered two fellowships in the field of cinema; and the Canadian Council for Reconstruction through Unesco offered 64 fellowships, each for six months' study in a variety of fields including documentary and educational film production, to candidates from Austria, Belgium, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Poland and the British Colonies.

#### FREE FLOW DIVISION

To facilitate the free flow of ideas across national and other barriers has been one of the specific objectives for which Unesco was established. As early as 1946, the Preparatory Commission, which was set up to bring Unesco into being, began to work on a revision of the League of Nations' "Convention to Facilitate the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character." This revision grew into the draft



SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL



PIERRE FRESNAY

2 Catholic Lives filmed by Maurice Cloche

PIERRE BLANCHAR

Docteur LAENNEC

RENÉ LAENNEC

FILMS CLOCHE INTERFRANCE



of a ,, Convention to Facilitate the International Circulation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific and Cultural Character", which was adopted by Unesco's First General Conference in 1946 and was approved for transmission to Member States by the Second General Conference in 1947. A summary report of the comments received has been circulated to Member States since then, and the Third Session of Unesco's General Conference, which was held at Beirut in November, 1948, was asked to determine further action. As early as December 1947, after the Second Session of the General Conference, the various other projects concerned with the free flow of films, broadcasts and press materials had been placed under the control of a new Free Flow Division headed by a Programme Director who was to be assisted in due course by specialists in all three media. However, since no budget for full-time film specialists had become available for this Unit during 1948, the film officers attached to the Technical Needs Division and the Projects Division established its first film routines by drawing up a number of briefs on the free circulation of newsreels for presentation by the head of the Free Flow Division at the Conference on Freedom of Information which was held in Geneva in March and April 1948. Meanwhile the staff of the new Unit went ahead with the collection and analysis of new data on obstacles to the free flow of films in general and newsreels in particular, taking advantage of all such information compiled by the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information, the Universal Postal Union, the International Telecommunications Union, and all other specialized Organisations active in this field.

#### PROJECTS DIVISION

To increase and expand Unesco's task of promoting the production and distribution of films on educational, scientific and cultural subjects, Unesco's Mexico City Conference resolved in 1947 to create at once within the framework of the Mass Communications Department a *Projects Division* capable of initiating and influencing the production of films on Unesco subjects. The officers recruited to staff the unit were selected not only because they possessed general experience in their fields but also with a view to their access to directors and script writers in documentary and feature film production.

Three films were produced in 1947 and 1948 in connection with this programme: «HUNGRY MINDS», a film on the problems of children in wardevastated countries and the part played by Unesco in re-educating them (produced by the National Film Board of Canada for the Canadian Council for Reconstruction through Unesco); «CHILDREN

OF THE RUINS», a film on a similar subject (produced by the Crown Film Unit for the British Ministry of Education); and «LETTER FROM A STUDENT», a film on the educational reconstruction of older age groups in war-devastated countries (produced by the World Today for the World Student Service Fund). In addition, funds for two other films on kindred subjects have been obligated, and production contracts for these films will be placed in the near future.

As part of a programme to stimulate the production of films on educational, scientific and cultural subjects, Unesco has also undertaken to prepare for the *United Nations Conference on the Conservation of Resources* a list of films most urgently required to promote conservation of resources, and to collect funds for the production of such films.

On the distribution side, Unesco has negotiated with distributors in a number of countries to facilitate the entry and circulation of the best educational, scientific and cultural films produced in other countries.

Finally, as part of an international information service on educational, scientific and cultural films, research for a number of books on film subjects was commissioned by Unesco. These books, catalogues and pamphlets deal with such subjects as (1) Mobile Film Units; (2) Films on the relation between food supplies and population figures; and (3) Obstacles in the international circulation of newsreels. In addition, the film unit has compiled four international draft lists of films on "Fundamental Education", "International Understanding", "Popularisation of Science" and "Popularisation of the Arts". These film lists have been submitted to member nations for correction of data and additional information. When all lists have been fully corrected they will be printed in English and French as first items in an educational world film catalogue. At the same time the film unit has established a system of compiling and indexing information on the production, distribution and utilisation of films on education, science and culture in all countries. This information has so far been issued only on demand and as part of the "United Nations Film Bulletin", the "Unesco Courier" and the "Fundamental Education Bulletin". It is expected, however, that the Mass Communications Department will be able to issue in 1949 a "Communications Quarterly" which will contain an extensive collection of film data in condensed form for use by film specialists, educators, film trade journals and other specialised organisations.

Most of this work is carried on in close co-operation with the film officers of the United Nations and its specialised organisations who are joined together in a "United Nations Film Board", the central planning agency for all United Nations film activities.

Ernest Borneman

## Less Potent than Fire but more Powerful than the Printing Press!

Inspite of its half century of incessant productivity, the Cinema is still in its infancy.

To outward seeming it consists of a display which, commercial or industrial in part, reaches at a blow, millions of people all over the world. Nevertheless, it has scarcely even started to penetrate the confines of the intelligentzia. Maybe, one by one, the strongholds of superiority are ceding under the assault of the Cinema, still, it has to be admitted that, as far as the majority of cinema-goers are concerned, it seldom rises above the level of a simple weekly past-time, demanding no concentration, an opiate rather than a stimulant. Among its faithful adherents may, perhaps, be found a few harmless optimists looking for higher and better things. They are the devotess of the twentieth century's most powerful invention; something equivalent to the invention of a new means of communication, a new language, one with an abundant vocabulary, luminously clear and powerfully suggestive to the minds of all.

In what category shall we place it?

"Less potent than fire but more powerful than the printing press".

Before an audience accustomed to and skilled in other forms of expression, mathematics, literature, oratory, one could pursue this train of thought to its logical conclusion. It would follow that, being the most perfect method of expression known to us, the cinema not only conveys ideas better and with greater facility by presenting them in new and attractive forms, it actually itself stimulates thought; brings us face to face with new concepts, introduces us to new methods of speculation.

Such a conclusion, however, would be at once repudiated by the almost insurmountable barrier of human vanity. It would arouse interest, possibly even enthusiasm, but recieve no understanding, no true acceptance. The reason: nobody cares to admit that the processes of thought, the educative tools which have made him the man he is, could be at once displaced by a newcomer still in its embryonic stages.

Nevertheless, in the series of articles of which this forms the introduction, we propose to explore the implications of the following two presumptions: 1) the tremendous expressive potentialities of the language of film; 2) the motion pictures' contribution to thought.

To begin with we invite our readers to ponder the significance of the factors which make up a film. We intend to show that films warrant as much attention as does a book, a symphony, a painting; that they can be expected to throw as much light on the source of their inspiration as any other creative work; that an examination of their vocabulary, rules, style, composition, history, authors, is as likely to enlighten us on the thousand problems which intrigue us.

We are confident that, having accepted the notion of the film as a new language, no one will hesitate to follow us along the fascinating byeways which this concept suggests. It may be that they will even take the lead in exploring the interesting trends of thought which this idea of visual speculation presents.

Our proposition is adressed in the first place to all right-minded men who are concerned to keep themselves abreast of developments in the so-called "mechanical arts". It is also offered to cinema professionals, to teachers and to all those who have charge of the formation of youth.

To those who may feel that we are concerned overmuch with purely secular considerations, we hope to show that our ideas have their roots in the profoundest teachings of our religion. It could hardly be otherwise with those who, like us, connected with the cinema, have constantly in mind the words uttered at one of the annual Cinema Masses which bring blessings to Paris, by an Eminent Prince of the Church:, Gentlemen, since you are the sons of Light, the Church blesses you!"

## THE THOMIST PHILOSOPHY

TURNS TO THE CINEMA

My friend A. R u s z k o w s k i has sent me this plendid title and has asked me to summarize under it the principal theses that we teach in the Cinema section of the "Pro Deo" University at Rome and of the "Institut des Sciences de l'Opinion Publique" at Paris. I should never have dreamt of inventing such a title myself, for it will cause both the experts in Cinema and very probably the experts in Thomism to shudder and jump and maybe bellow. Yet on reflection I believe my friend R u s z k o w s k i is right: the experts in Cinema and in Thomism must be made to leap, with surprise if necessary, for they have every reason to meet even if only accidentally.

The film producer feels that he has made a beautiful film, the critic agrees or disagrees with any number of arguments and interpretations, the general public flocks to see it because "it is beautiful", or provides an escape, even the distributors make their calculations in accordance with their own conception of the beautiful film that pleases the public. There you have a great number of people philosophizing (perhaps without realising it, like Molière's Monsieur Jourdain who was surprised to find he had employed Grammar and Syntax every time he formed a sentence). So it is very true that Man is an incurably philosophical animal, a being who judges things as a result of his conception of their intimate nature and ultimate causes.

Seeing that everyone in the cinema world talks about the beautiful, it is natural to try and find out what they are actually talking about. Since Thomists know that their philosophy is the contrary of the idealist philosophies, in the sense that Thomism makes contact with reality, with the being of things, it is natural that they should follow us in an attempt to define the nature of the beautiful even in a world so little scholastic as the world of the cinema.

We may be forgiven if we begin at the beginning: first the general lines along which we can distinguish beauty in itself, then the different kinds of beauty, and finally something precisely on beauty in relation to film.

#### AN INTROSPECTIVE PROBLEM: THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF AESTHETIC PERCEPTION

There is nothing less theoretic than the aristotelianthomist philosophy which we call for short Thomism. The human intelligence comes to the knowledge of the inner nature of things by basing itself on knowledge arrived at through the senses: "nihil in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu" (There is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses). In the matter under review the Thomist begins by looking at beautiful things whilst trying to distinguish clearly what is going on within himself at the same time.

In other words, Thomism maintains that the essence or nature of beauty is discovered by induction starting from an analysis of the internal experience, that is to say from a psychological self-examination in the matter of aesthetic appreciation. But any normal person can verify the fact that aesthetic appreciation is differentiated from other forms of knowledge by the following combination:

1. it is sense-knowledge (sight or hearing or the two together):

2. it is at the same time an intellectual knowledge which, in its knowledge of the Universal, goes beyond the simple perception of the Individual provided by the senses, whether external (sight, hearing) or internal (imagination, memory):

3. it also includes at the same time enjoyment.

The close connection between sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge in aesthetic appreciation presents us with the Idea as existing in a material setting. By so doing it actually provides a piece of intuitive knowledge, distinct from abstract knowledge which, while rendering more clear the ideas as they are in themselves, tends to deprive them of their manifold concrete implications.

Aesthetic enjoyment allied with knowledge turns aesthetic appreciation into disinterested pleasure. It precedes the judgment whereby the person knowing becomes aware of the object known as something other than itself. The object presented to the will as something other than itself which nevertheless belongs to it, is agreeable to it or corresponds in some other way to the natural tendency of the volitional faculties, creates a kind of enjoyment essentially different from aesthetic enjoyment.

Modern aesthetes have written volumes on the analysis of this basic phenomenon, and they continue to argue about the problems of intuition and emotion in aesthetic perception. Thomism is not to be set in opposition to them, simply because St. Thomas never elaborated a treatise on Aesthetics. The chief reason why he did not do so was that he lacked the necessary variety of aesthetic experience, being unacquainted with the highest forms of painting, of the novel, of music and a fortiori of the art of the cinema, which developed after the Renaissance. But the principles of his Metaphysics undoubtedly constitute the "philosophia perennis" wherein good sense singles out in actual experiences everything essential in the objective reality to enable one to get back to the cause and to put the rational mind on the way towards the knowledge of "that which is". Very rare indeed are the observations by the Stagirite and the Scholastics on psychological self-examination which have been surpassed in the present stage of civilization. It is significant that a simple sentence uttered "per accidens" in the works of St. Thomas summarizes for us with powerful simplicity the essential element of aesthetic experience: "Pulchrum est id quod visum placet" ("The beautiful is that which pleases in the very act of perception").

#### A PROBLEM OF REASONING: THE DEFINITION OF THE BEAUTIFUL

The perception of beauty, a specific mode of human knowledge, is a very real fact which no one could relegate to the realm of theories or philosophical fancies. It is very clear from another angle that this aesthetic perception, whose nature is known to us as being an act of intuitive knowledge, charged with feeling, is caused by objects outside ourselves. We experience aesthetic appreciation and enjoyment only to the extent that an external object acts upon us. Aesthetic perception is an effect of which the beautiful thing is the cause.

The philosophical problem is, therefore, one of ordinary common sense which any ordinary reasonable being cannot avoid putting to himself: what is the nature of the beauti-

ful that causes aesthetic perception?

To reply to this question the Thomist philosopher will not be satisfied, as modern philosophers so often think, to manipulate in his mind a few syllogisms which will produce the answer by a simple play of Major, Minor and Conclusion. Neither Aristotle nor St. Thomas matured their philosophical system to the extent of providing the answer to the manifold questions of aesthetics properly so called. Moreover there is no field of thought in which it is more difficult to philosophize than in the domain of art. The artist is in a certain sense the most like to God as being a creator, and every artist creates his own worlds, immensely diverse in their internal laws from worlds created by other artists. How could one, therefore, define what is common to them all in that diversity and multiplicity which has become so bewildering now that we have witnessed the blossoming of contradictions such as Naturalism, Impressionism, Cubism, Expressionism, Surrealism and so on?

In this brief outline we shall confine ourselves to formulating a single concrete and realist question and to gi-

ving the essentials of the necessary answer.

Despite the enormous multiplicity and diversity of the things we call beautiful, the fact remains that they all awaken in us specifically the same complexity of sensate and intellectual knowledge intimately allied to and charged with feeling that makes the whole man vibrate.

The philosophical question is thus somewhat paradoxical: granted that aesthetic perception exists, how is it possible? The answer which must be given is as follows: the thing seen, the thing of beauty which gives enjoyment in the very act of man's intuitive knowledge, must be similar in nature to that of the man seeing it. Here we come to an unexpected application of one of the great central ideas of the Thomist metaphysic, the idea of "connaturalitas" which forms a bridge between the Transcendentals, the Good and the True, as much in Art as it does in Mysticism. In regard to the Gifts of the Holy Ghost and the profound laws of the mystical life, St. Thomas, starting from the notion of knowledge by connaturality, fruit of divine love, has formulated syntheses that are eternal.

A world no less mysterious and one which may be called naturally divine, is waiting to be explored in the domain of the mysterious life of Art, a creation of the beautiful. We must limit ourselves here to setting forth quite simply the different stages of the reasoning which has allo-

wed us to reach our goal.

1. The nature of the beautiful must be substantially like the nature of the man perceiving it through a knowledge which involves at once both the sense (matter) and the intelligence (spirit) in a unity so intense that it is at the same

time an enjoyment.

2. Now it is precisely the nature of man to be at the same time both matter and spirit, and that in a unity which is the most intense and the most complete, called substantial, which means that the composite of material elements in man receives its whole unity and even its very existence from the spirit, a spiritual principle superior to matter, which we call Soul.

3. So we sum up the conclusion briefly: The beautiful is a material composite which receives its substantial form, its basic unity, from a spiritual principle, that is to say a principle superior to Matter.

#### A PROBLEM OF CREATION: THE THREE KINDS OF BEAUTY

The definition of the beautiful as we have expressed it may seem too abstract and too general to be of any practical use. It will suffice to apply it to the critical study of all works of art (and of nature) which create aesthetic emotion in us to see that it gives us at last the possibility of seeing how the modern schools, Impressionism, Cubism, Symbolism, Surrealism, Neo-realism, etc., correspond to profound possibilities included in the very nature of the beautiful.

Indeed a real appreciation of the relations between Matter and Spirit expressed in the definition of the beautiful is sufficient to show that there are three kinds of beauty corresponding to three kinds of artistic inspiration.

1. — There is sense beauty which is the beauty proper to the harmony or contrast of lines and colours it two dimensions (photography, drawing, painting), in three dimensions (sculpture, architecture), and the beauty of sound modulations developed in what is called the fourth dimension, time (music). These kinds of Beauty are in themselves independent of the representation of any particular object, that is to say of fidelity to nature (which justifies beauty in Cubism, Purism, Impressionism, purely plastic art, music wrongly called "abstract") and are without any express concept (which is why we enjoy a Cubist painting or a sonata without seeking to know "what is it that the artist

wanted to express?").

2. - Intelligible beauty (i. e. basically of the mind) is the beauty proper to a complexity of ideas seen in a new composition or in movement. In this case the inspiration originates in the ideas which elude the apprehension of the senses but are bound up with matter in a special relationship, an orientation contrary to intellectual abstraction. It is thus that a literary work differs from a scientific one: science tends to disembody the idea, literature to clothe it with flesh. A beautiful poem - ideas moving in a sea of emotion and sometimes also with a music of words. A beautiful novel, a beautiful drama or comedy - well-developed characters, groups or crowds welldefined, with ideas clashing or harmonising in the development of certain external happenings. A beautiful discourse or even a beautiful treatise (I am thinking of the pages in St. Thomas on the nature of human knowledge, on the nature of the angels, and on the nature of God) - ideas are born, made more precise, begin to grow, open up new horizons and are unified into a synthesis which, like man himself, is the effecting by a great simple principle of unity in diversity.

3. — Symbolic beauty is the beauty brought to life when material forms become instrumental in expressing a spiritual reality above themselves. The St. Dominic of Fra Angelico — a beautiful figure, a harmonious composition of lines and colours which have their own sense beauty but which at the same time go beyond the material layout by expressing, through the happy chance medium of a gesture towards the Cross, the flight of his whole being to God in order to give to others what he himself receives from God, contemplata aliis tradere". The Christ of El Greco, of Roualt, of Servaes, of E. Nolde, stripped of all sense beauty, but expressing intensely and doing nothing else but express, the drama of the God-man become, as the Prophet says, ,, a worm and no man ..... an outcast ... a victim of expiation".

As may have been seen, intelligible beauty is almost always enshrined in symbolic beauty. It is extremely important, however, to be able to distinguish intelligible beauty in a brilliant dialogue or a well-constructed plot; these latter are often foreign to the central reality which the work was meant to express.

## A NEW FACTOR: THE ART OF THE CINEMA, THE MOST COMPLETE AND MOST EXPRESSIVE OF THE ARTS

It has been said that the art of the cinema is a synthesis of all the arts. One must go further: the art of the Cinema can give us not only the most complete but also the most expressive beauty. Sense beauty and intelligible beauty which the artist embodies in a film almost inevitably sacrifice thereby their own nature to produce a form of beauty that is specifically new.

The art of the Cinema calls in plastic art and musical art, which are directed towards sense beauty, and also literary art, directed toward intelligible beauty, but of its very nature it uses them as instruments in the expression of a reality higher than material forms or intellectual concepts. The two specific principles which make the art of the Cinema into something new, are the following:

a) the shot, which exercises choice in space by the free presentation of exterior things — a body, a group, a room, a town, a road, a countryside, and everything which, when ,,shot", will become expressive in the highest degree.

b) rhythm, which exercises its choice in time by a studied succession of external images and of complementary sounds — words, music and silences — everything which, in the build-up of the film, will acquire the maximum intensity, deep suggestion, mysterious expression of movements within a man's being, states of soul made to live on the screen.

The film differs from a series of photographs or paintings, or from a succession of words or musical variations precisely because each of the constituent elements is chosen simply from its expressiveness in relation to a central theme which is to be put over to the public. By means of the close-up or the pan, of the speech or the dialogue, of the musical background or expressive silence, the film only accentuates that aspect of human reality which inspires the director to communicate that reality as he sees it to those who will come to his film.

To illustrate this essential law one should analyse one by one the examples of photographic and pictorial beauty (in a small number of colour-films), of plastic beauty (in films like "ATLANTIDE" by P a b s t, "LA BELLE ET LA BETE" by C o c t e a u,) of musical and literary beauty too, all of which lose their individuality as soon as they are caught up in the vital stream of the build-up of a film. Two examples will suffice.

The masterpiece of the Dutch Director, Joris I vens, is called, RAIN". If the "stills" were to be shown, it would make a magnificent exhibition of photographic art, showing all the different harmonies of light and shade on the roofs, in the streets, on the terraces... and in the gutters of Amsterdam. But it happens that a film expert has built up these photographs in cinematographical order, beginning with fine gentle rain, monotonous at first, but swelling into a dirty downpour and gradually producing an atmosphere of gloom, only to be dispelled little by little by the sun slowly rising and triumphantly casting its joyous rays over the town, which again goes on its cheerful and busy

way. The photographs have become movement, and not merely physical movement but soul movement, passing from surprise through monotony to sadness and last of all to the exultant hymn of triumphant life. Each photograph as such has its own sense beauty, not expressing any precise idea nor having any need to do so in order to be beautiful. But in the specifically cinematographic movement devised by Joris I v e n s the photographs become forgotten in the expression of a deeper reality, a human and spiritual reality far above the nature of mere photographs — the song of peaceful and assured joy that shines in the human soul through and above the blows of adversity.

"HENRY V" is, notwithstanding the success of "HAM-LET", Laurence Olivier's masterpiece in the world of the cinema. Shakespeare's drama is beautiful, the magnificent speeches of the King, of his enemies, of his soldiers, of Falstaff and his companions, of queens and princesses, are gathered together here with all the beauty of classic and picturesque language, lively dialogue, moments of tension and of dramatic or comic relief, which make this a masterpiece of literature for all time. But it is more. The literature contained therein has become one of many elements expressing cinematographically, that is to say, more intensely, the central theme of Shakespeare's work. Olivier wished first of all to place' Shakespeare's literary work within the historical contemporary setting, introducing, with a touch of irony, the natural reactions of the public to the artificial character of the play. The soldiers and citizens carry on with their normal business while the actors propound and transact futile genealogical and archeological arguments to support the rights of the English King against his French cousin, as if engaged in some useless but pretentious game proper to autocrats. The crowd are amused, not realising that it concerns them too, since they are always called upon to war, without ever knowing why, with crowds of others, ignorant and poor like themselves. Thus Olivier confronts Shakespeare's theatre with its contemporary reality. Then he blends that life with the magic of well-balanced and metrical words into a world of chivalry decked with flamboyant costumes, into a fantastic panorama of candy colours and the childish decor of a fairy story. This is the second feature of Shakespeare's play: beautiful words, fine panoply and sentiment, a war resembling a game of make-believe for children.

But here the tragedy really begins to emerge from this compound in a manner more rich and mysterious than any other art could have made it. The scenes become more intense, the colours more vital and profound, and insensibly the rhythm rises to the great climax of the central scene: Henry V, the youthful leader, honest and true, listening to his conscience.

In the midst of a darkness in which night brusquely mingles with the dark dramatic tones of his thoughts, Henry V, in a corner of the camp at Azincourt, where the ignorant conversation of a few poor, discontented soldiers increases his sense of solitude, is brought face to face with his terrible responsability as master of men. The famous soliloquy on the conscience of the King, who knows that in the end he must answer to God for the lives and deaths of the many whom his decision will affect. The finished art of the film gives us here an intensity which neither literature, nor painting, nor the theatre could have attained. That is the secret of the art of cinematography: sensible beauty (landscapes, castles, men and costumes) and intelligible beauty (flashes of wit and humour, the compounding and variation of characters and conversations, prodigies, intellectual in-

vention in dramatic motion) are both there but they are transformed. By choosing each actor's most expressive moments and placing them in a context which, thanks to an infallible rhythm leads to the climax of the theme on conscience, the producer succeeds, almost unexpectedly, in striking a blow which catches at the heart of everyman.

We conclude. The Abstract has brought us to the Concrete. Philosophy has led us to film-criticism. But film-criticism pushes us back again to Philosophy. For the critic is but the spokesman, of him who, having tasted beauty cannot resist thinking about the things he has tasted. The public must be taught to think when they have seen a beautiful film. They must be liberated from that excessive passivity proper to the cinema. They must be taught to hear that interior voice which seeks to know the nature of a reality which comes about as the result of the convergence and crystallizing of superficial impressions.

The education of the public is not confined to critics only; it is the vocation of all who believe in mankind, in the first place, therefore, of all Christians. All well-instructed and responsible Christians should, in the name of true philosophy, be able to understand and use the riches of the art of cinema. They should be equipped to defend the true nature of beautiful cinematography against the attacks of those who lower and disfigure it. They should aim at creating in colleges, universities, study-circles and wherever the Apostolate is organised, a true Christian cinema-culture. By supporting master-pieces of film art, an effective influence will be brought to bear upon production. In a future article we shall come to the practical, by briefly presenting the technique of the Christian dialectic as applied to the "Cineforum", that is, the cinema discussion group. This applies the method of ancient philosophy to the enlightenment of the public, a method which could not only enlighten but also transform the world of today.

F. A. Morlion. O. P.

### "CATHOLICS TALK ABOUT FILM"

THE LESSONS OF THE BRUSSELS CONGRESS

This Volume of 400 pages entitled "LES CATHO-LIQUES PARLENT DU CINEMA." ("Catholics Talk About The Cinema")\* offers us an account of the Fourth International Catholic Cinema Congress held at Brussels, June 16th to 22nd, 1947. Without presuming to give a detailed analysis, we think it useful to outline the main theme of the Congress and to give a general impression of the proceedings.

## THE EXTENT OF CATHOLIC CINEMA ACTION

It is only necessary to cast a glance at the contents page to ascertain the great variety of subjects dealt with. These coalesce to make up the general theme of the Congress, "Catholic Action in the World of The Cinema, according to the Directives of the Encyclical Vigilanti Cura". For this Pontifical Document touches on the most diverse problems concerning the role of the cinema in the world of today.

What has often been looked for in vain, a satisfactory explanation of our proper attitude with regard to certain aspects of the Encyclical, is here provided by the detailed study which, for the first time, is given to it by the Brussels Congress.

In a remarkable address at the inaugural session, M. Paul van Zeeland, the eminent Belgian statesman, struck the note characteristic of the Congress debates. He threw into relief the importance of the cinema in the world of today on the moral, social and economic planes, begging the congressists not to yield before the facts, that is to say, before the economic aspect of this powerful industry.

The economic problem was fully discussed, both in the plenary session during which M. Dervaux, President of the *Union Catholique du Cinéma* in Paris, presented his report on the Cinema industry, followed by several other contributions, and during the course of the Commission B. devoted to Cinema Commerce and Industry. It was evident from these discussions that Catholics gravitated more and more to the idea of a constructive participation in the industrial activities of the cinema.

The problems of culture and the cinema were given an equally important place.

The report presented by Professor Gedda (Italy) on "The Cinema, Instrument of Culture and of Education", followed by reports from the different countries on the activities which they undertake in this connection, as well as the work of Commission C (The Share of Technicians in Cinematographic Creation) and Commission D (The Cinema Press) showed that in Catholic circles there is a development of the cultural attitude towards the cinema.

On the purely moral plane, profound study was given both to Film Appreciation as well as to methods of influencing the public.

In this category, the report of Mgr. MacClafferty on "The Methods of Work of the American Legion Of Decency" and the communications given on Cinema Legislation and on the National Reviewing Offices, demanded by the Encyclical, threw a great deal of light on the systems of "moral classifications" adopted for films. Commission E (The Cinema in Missionary Countries) and Commission F (Substandard Film) were also interesting from this point of view

<sup>\*)</sup> Editions Universitaires, 163, rue du Thrône, Bruxelles.

The presence at the Congress of a large number of professional film people testifies to the progress made. Producers, distributors, publicity men, met with script-writers, directors and film critics. It seemed to be an actual realisation of the aims of the Catholic Cinema Union as established in France.

#### TAKING PART IN THE LIFE OF THE CINEMA

The general tendency towards an active share in the life of the cinema was very definite. Various speakers told of the friendly spirit of Catholics with regard to members of the profession and to cultural movements connected with the cinema. This tendency found a striking confirmation in the discourse which the Belgian Primate, His Eminence Cardinal V an Roey, gave at the closing session.

The very fact that the Congress was organized at the same time as the Brussels "Festival Mondial du Film et des Beaux-Arts", is a sufficient indication of this spirit of co-operation. The organizors of the Film Festival and the principal foreign delegates, on the other hand, readily responded to the invitation to be present at Pontifical Mass celebrated in the presence of Cardinal Van Roey and at the reception ceremony which followed it.

In this same spirit, non-Catholic journalists were invited to attend the plenary reunions and the meeting of the Commission on the Cinema Press.

Finally, to emphasise the interest which it has in cinema production, O.C.I.C. offered, for the first time on the occasion of the Brussels Congress, a special Award for the Film Most Capable Of Contributing To The Spiritual And Moral Benefit of Mankind. "VIVERE IN PACE" (To Live in Peace) the Italian film directed by Luigi Z a mp a and produced by the Lux-Paolo Company, it was that carried off this distinction. It is worth noting that it was not a specifically Catholic film, though it has a strongly Christian feeling. The success which this film has since enjoyed throughout the world is confirmation of the justice of the judgement of O.C.I.C.

#### THE INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF O.C.I.C.

The Congress gave visible proof of the development of O.C.I.C. In spite of the difficulties presented by passports, special regulations and by the uneasy spirit of the times, 200 congressists were gathered together, representing 19 countries.

The General Council of O.C.I.C. met during the Congress. After having paid homage to the memory of the lamented Canon Abel Brohée, late President, it proceeded to the election of new officers.

Dr. Jean Bernard (Luxembourg) formerly Secretary General, was unanimously elected President. Mademoiselle Yvonne de Hemptinne, Executive Secretary, succeeded Dr. Bernard as General Secretary. Then, in view of the importance attached to relations with other institutions, a Secretary General,

specially designated to deal with external relations, was nominated in the person of Dr. André Rusz-kowski.

During the Congres, several persons from different countries specially interested in educational and religious films in sub-standard gauge, gathered together on the initiative of Professor Remo Branca (Italy) to form co-operative group to deal with this matter.

An important decision reached by the General Council charged the General Secretariat with the task of organizing an international exchange of information on recent films, a unified terminology for moral classification being adopted for this purpose.

Two indications of ecclesiastical approbation which were particulary precious, were the presence of His Excellency, Mgr. Cento, the Apostolic Nuntio, who himself brought to the Congress the message of the Holy Father, and the very active part played on the closing day by His Eminence, Cardinal Van Roy.

In the same way, the presence of M. Roger Millot, President of Pax Romana (the International Movement of Catholic Intellectuals) whose speech at the closing session was so superlative, was evidence of the growing interest of thinking Catholics with regard to the cinema.

### TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE CINEMA

The Congress marked a new stage in the development of Catholic teaching with regard to the cinema.

"Vigilanti Cura" is the admirable fount of this teaching. It is still necessary for Catholics to study its text in detail in order to be able to apply its teaching to the various aspects of cinematographic activity. The Brussels Congress gave itself to this task vigourously with more than forty reports, interventions and speeches from experts in the Apostolate of the Cinema, from film professionals and from members of the general public. Without pretending that all this matter is of equal worth, it has to be acknowledged that here one has a documentation that is indispensable for any one who wishes to understand the attitude of catholics towards the cinema.

An outstanding discourse was that on "THE CHURCH AND THE CINEMA" delivered by Père Grandjean, O. P. at the final ceremony. The conclusions he drew from this subject deserve to be widely known, as, indeed, do the conclusions of the entire Congress. It is clear that such concentrated Christian thought devoted to the cinema should be more known and brought to the notice of those inclined to underestimate its value. It should be established on a permanent footing, its purpose being the constructive approach to film problems. This, indeed, is the constant preoccupation of O.C.I.C. It is the reason why this Review has been published. A. R.

UNITED STATES

## HOLLYWOOD CRISIS

SEEN BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS

## TOWARDS A NEW SENSE OF MORAL RESPONSABILITY? . . .

by Thomas M. PRYOR

Movie critic on the "New York Times" (New York)

The American motion picture industry has finally come to the realization that the world no longer is Hollywood's oyster. Facing up to this cold, hard fact has not been a pleasant experience, however now that the issue has been recognised Hollywood is taking aggressive steps to demonstrate to the world (and itself) that it can thrive and prosper in its own backyard if need be. The loss of revenue from foreign markets, particularly from the lucrative United Kingdom, dealt a severe blow to the psychology of the American industry, which for years has spent money lavishly in developing the art of the cinema to its present high degree of technical expertness.

Hollywood has often, and not without reason, been criticized for being profligate. But who can say that the motion picture would have achieved its present eminence as a social force if Hollywood had been afraid to risk the costs of experimentation? In this materialistic world human endeavor knows only one reward, sad as the admission may be, and those who guide the destiny of the American movie industry recognized this fact long years ago. Perhaps it can be argued that the price paid did not always justify the results obtained, but since it is practically impossible to gauge the value of ideas by etablished monetary yardsticks it is futile now to excoriate Hollywood for its financial wantoness of days gone by.

The tremendous importance of the screen as a medium for education as well as entertainment has been demonstrated beyond question. The important factor confronting those seriously interested in the further development of this medium of communication is the direction it should take from now on. Films possessing the quality to attract international attention can never be made cheaply, for too many individuals are associated in their production.

However, this is not meant to infer that there is not room for tremendous cost savings through elimination of waste, either as a result of poor ideas, petty jealouises among personalities striving for personal affluence, or any other number of factors down to and including callous laziness and immoral disregard for responsibility on the part of film workers from the highest paid artists to the lowest paid artisans. The American film producers rode the gravy train for so many years that most of them actually were blind to the grave dangers presented by the doubling of production costs which contributed nothing apparent in the way of added quality.

As long as the box-office receipts showed a profit on the overall investment they were content to acquiesce to higher labor demands in the form of more wages, shorter working hours and dispersal of work to a point where, in many cases, four persons were employed to do work previously done by one individual. Now all that is changing and unfortunately a lot of people are being hurt in the process. But the prospects of getting only \$17,000,000 annually as profit from the United Kingdom market, which formerly yielded approximately \$60,000,000 in normal years, coupled with the loss of additional millions of dollars from the European and Asiatic markets was more than the producers could blink at. Moreover, the domestic boxoffice began leveling off from the

wartime lush heights and that added materially to the disquieting effect.

With the paring of production costs job security also became a matter of grave concern for those employed in film studios. When this reporter was in Hollywood last July new production was practically at a standstill and as a consequence well over 2,000 workers employed on a picture to picture basis were off salary. To these could be added numerous others, it was not possible to determine exact figures, employed on a regular weekly basis who had been laid off temporarily or permanently. Moreover, contract personnel, including writers and players, were being let go when their options expired.

All this naturally was unnerving and as a consequence fear and trembling showed through the masque of bluff heartiness the citizens of Hollywood were affecting to impress their neighbours. While those who control the studios showed evidence of grave concern, their anxiety was not nearly as marked because the industry as a whole is better off financially today than ever before. Most of the companies, certainly nearly all the major ones, have comfortably large financial reserves. This paradoxical situation has led some wags to comment that the movie industry is in effect manufacturing its own depression in a general era of inflation. Actually, this cost cutting constitutes sound business reasoning, for the time to build the barricade is before, not after, the wolf strikes.

It is, of course, impossible to forecast what effect this belt-tightening process is going to have on the quality of future film entertainment. However, it does not seem likely that American movies will get any worse. For instance, during the last three months (June trough August) less than a handful of really worthwhile films appeared on Broadway theatre screens. In fact, only seven out of approximately fifty pictures seen by this writer are considered sufficiently rewarding to be brought to attention again. Let's take them up individually, though not necessarily according to merit, in the next few paragraphs.

The outstanding one of the lot, perhaps even of the season, is "FOREIGN AFFAIR", a gay, witty entertainment, yet one that provides a penetrating and sobering glimpse of life in post-war Berlin. The talented writer-director-producer team of Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder are responsible for this exceptional show relased by Paramount. Unless one understands the American mentality one might be shocked by the way the film jibes at the gravity of officialdom as represented here by a party of American Congressmen, especially a prim and punctilious Congresswoman played winningly by Jean Arthur,

on an inspection tour of the United States administered section of Berlin. Nothing is sacred to Brackett and Wilder when it can be utilized (without malicious intent, however), for a laugh. Indeed they even manage to take a light view, and get away with it, of the thundering Russian soldiery in Berlin.

The problem of fraternization is the core of the story and the producers frankly face the fact that when a lonely soldier comes into contact with an attractive woman his natural instinct is to forget Army regulations. «A FOREIGN AFFAIR» recognizes the basic truth that human beings are the same the world over, when not agitated by political ideologies. Thus it is that the American officer, John Lund, takes to shielding an alluring ex-Nazi entertainer who manages to keep going now by singing daring songs in a smokefilled, ramshackle cabaret. Marlene Dietrich, absent from Hollywood for some years, plays this seductress with considerable artistry and with a daring which must be, at least, partly responsible for the National Legion of Decency's decision to give the picture a "B" or "objectionable in part for all" rating.

«THE EMPEROR WALTZ» finds the incomparable Bing Crosby making his democratic way about the court of Franz Joseph as an early-type American traveling salesman. This also is a Brackett and Wilder contribution to merriment, done up in striking Technicolor and presenting Crosby as the peddler of a new fangled contraption called the phonograph, who takes to wooing a beautiful countess in his sparetime. The story is slight and hinges pretty much on a pair of dogs which bring the commoner and the royal lady to a meeting of hearts. Truth to tell, some of it is not nearly as engaging as Brackett and Wilder possibly imagined, or hoped, it would be. But there is a very pleasant quality to the whole picture, as it is richly endowed with beautiful scenery and there is a quaint charm about the pomp and circumstance that once existed in Austria. Joan Fontaine is exquisite to contemplate as the countess.

For the kind of rousing action that has endeared the fictional Western film to audiences the world over there is no better example at the moment than John Ford's «FORT APACHE». Mr. Ford has crowded his screen with some of the most dynamic sequences of hard riding United States cavalry that this observer has witnessed in years. But the great director has not relied only on physical displays that quicken the pulse. «FORT APACHE» may well be said to represent the first signs of maturity indicated by Hollywood in its frequent recourse to the American-Indian wars for story material. Mr. Ford has dared to shatter convention by making the Indian the "hero" an the "heavy" a martinet army colonel.

He is a blind, ignorant man with en overwhelming passion for revenge who attempts to deceive the Indians and leads his troops into a bloody massacre. Mr. Ford balances the violence with interludes of rough humour and nicely proportioned romantic sequences. Henry Fonda, John Wayne, Ward Bond and Victor McLaglen are wonderfully cast as the principal army men, and Shirley Temple and John Agar, her husband in real life, are pleasant as the young lovers.

Out of retirement and dancing better than ever before, Fred Astaire is justification enough for «EASTER PARADE», even if Irving Berlin hadn't written the songs, old and new, and Judy Garland hadn't been on hand to contribute her vocal and dancing talents. In fact, good as Miss Garland is, she gets some stiff competition from a long-stemmed miss named Ann Miller who also dances a few numbers with Astaire. (Incidentally, Astaire and Ginger Rogers are back together again in a forthcoming Metro musical, «THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY», which ought to be released in the Winter.)

Gangster style violence, for which American film producers have a peculiar fascination - perhaps because it generally pays off handsomely at the boxoffice — is served up in generous doses both in «THE STREET WITH NO NAME» and in «KEY LARGO». Both are considerably above average and there is no doubt that for pure cinematic expression «THE STREET WITH NO NAMES» is decidedly better. This is a typical narrative of law enforcement, as represented by the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), closing in relentlessly on gangsters, but it is punctuated by many sharply accented episodes that make one grab the chair arms and hold on. William Keighley, the director, has used his camera effectively and he has also drawn a sharply pointed demonstration of malevolence from his principal performer, Richard Widmark.

IN «KEY LARGO» two of the toughest exponents of gangsterism, Edward G. Robinson and Humphrey Bogart are pited against each other and so it's no wonder that the picture bristles with excitement. Playing an oldtime gangster who has returned from exile to a sweltering Florida key and plans to get back into "business", Mr. Robinson gives a truly great performance. One can only regret that the talent he has lavished on this monstrous character might have been diverted to more elevating endeavor. But some slight moral purpose is achieved with the

eventual demise of this gangster at the hands of one of his ilk. The latter is played expertly, too, by Humphrey Bogart. While there is considerable talk in this film, and much of it is of a murky philosophical nature, John Huston's direction is versatile enough to maintain a fair semblance of movement. Moreover, Mr. Huston makes exciting melodramatic use of a hurricane that sweeps in from the semi-tropical Atlantic Ocean. Here again is a case where the force of good triumphs over evil, but in the process one wonders, perchance, if "good" doesn't come off second best at that.

It isn't often that one encounters a film where divorce is not advocated as the only cureall for marital difficulties, so it is a distinct pleasure to call attentation to «PITFALL», starring Dick Powell with Lizabeth Scott and Jane Wyatt. This is probably the most moral little movie that has come out of Hollywood in sometime aid one of the most realistic, too. Every thing about the picture is natural as life itself; the sets are in keeping with the financial position of the characters, and the women dress just about as their counterparts in life would under the same circumstances. That is indeed a revelation in itself, but, as we said before, the moral tone is remarkably sound.

«PITFALL» tells the story of a man, an insurance adjuster, who, in a spell of boredom with workaday routine, takes up a casual flirtation with a pretty girl from whom he is endeavoring to recover stolen goods. When she discovers that he is married she halts the affairs. However, a jealous suitor whom she has spurned seeks revenge in a manner that leads Mr. Powell to kill a man in self defense. Then, of course, the wole story comes out and Powell's wife is confronted by the problem of forgiving the single lapse of fidelity that brought such disaster or running off to obtain her freedom via divorce. Although the wife's faith in her spouse is understandably disturbed and she remarks that she may not feel the same toward him again, it is distinctly encouraging to hear her assert that divorce certainly is not the solution to the problem.

Could it be that this is the first manifestation of a new sense of moral responsibility on the part of American movie makers? It is, of course, too early to jump to such a hopeful conclusion, but, at least, this is a promising indication. And, who can tell, perhaps the economic setback that Hollywood currently is experiencing will tend in some way or other to bring the producers into closer accord with the realities and responsibilities, social and spiritual, of the world in which we live...

#### HOLLYWOOD HOLDS HER HEAD

by William H. MOORING

Motion Picture Editor "The Tidings" (Los Angeles)

Hollywood never really recovered from post-war ,,jitters". Producers who for five years had idled along making millions out of stories extolling American and Allied valor on the fighting and home fronts, were bewildered when, with war's end, they had to visualize what types of postwar screen-plays might likely appeal to Americans and to added millions in shocked Europe and Asia.

Before the question had been answered along came the "cold war" still in progress and major Hollywood producers, afraid of screen stories with direct political implications, decided that the only way out for them was to make films and more films in which either sheer escapism or violence to the mind and spirit of man provided the basic theme.

Hollywood's practical isolation from the percussions of World War II resulted in an almost complete inability on the part of Hollywood writers and producers, to undertake screenplays dealing convincingly with the war and its effects upon the peoples outside of the USA, or to gauge post war public movie tastes abroad.

At the same time the U. S. State Department, through the Producers' Export organization (a cooperative foreign marketing firm through which all the major Hollywood companies clear their films overseas) has impressed upon the Hollywood producers that movies purporting to reflect, in various aspects, the norms of life in democratic America must be more carefully watched. It will not do, says the State Department, to send abroad films in which the American masses are repeatedly described as materialistic, in which American politicians are shown to be mostly crooked, in which divorce and re-marriage are depicted as everyday occurrences in the average American family and in which personal arrogance, selfishness, wastefulness and general profligancy are represented as common American characteristics.

It is true, of course, that too many Hollywood films have unjustifiably painted this depressing picture of life under "the American system". It is conceivable that even if truthfully described, the life habits of the average American citizen, are apt, once they reach the screens of war ravaged

countries, to arouse some jealousy or resentment among foreign audiences. How, except in disbelief or disgust, can rigourously rationed millions react to scenes in Hollywood films which show tables groaning under the weight of assorted luxury foods and wardrobes filled to capacity with rich clothing?

On the other hand, the slightest note of post-war poverty, restrictive controls or other depressing conditions in any Hollywood film, is sufficient to cut down its box office appeal in America. It is not even certain at this time, that films like "The Search" made with MGM money in Europe, will be as widely acclaimed by the paying public in the U.S. A. as it has been by the film critics. It deals with the displaced persons' problem by describing the individual case of a frantic mother who searches the camps for her little son from whom the war separated her. "Berlin Express" likewise made largely on the continent of Europe, shows for the first time just what Allied bombs did to enemy territory in Germany. It is powerful, as everyone agrees, but Americans would like to forget the war and cannot uniformly be drawn to entertainment which reminds them that Europe still bears those marks, even though war's effects, apart from a few thousand mourning hearts, already have been effaced from American memory.

To recapture their foreign markets at the expense of losing so much in their own, does not appeal to the Hollywood producers. They recognize that even if they sell all their films widely in every country abroad, the monies they can withdraw from those countries will represent at best only a small percentage of total earnings. Money frozen abroad tempts and will continue to tempt American producers to send over more films companies to Britain, to France, to Italy and to other parts of Europe and maybe even the Far East, to make films or parts of films there. The effect may well yield fresh ideas and talent to bolster Hollywood pictures which have dropped into a sad rut since the war. A rut in which ideas, rather than financial expenditures, have been lower and lower.

To one established fetish Hollywood producers still cling. They are convinced that romantic interest is the one stable factor in screen story writing. Sex and more sex is likely to become their rule.

Treatment of the sex theme will vary from the fairy-book type of romance dealt with in MGM's large scale, technicolor musical "The Pirate", in which Gene Kelly and Judy Garland star with Walter Slezak and Gladys Cooper, to "A Letter From an Unknown Woman", in which Joan Fontaine portrays a young girl who threw herself with abandon at a philandering lover (Louis Jourdan), bore him an illegitimate child and years later was prepared to give up her husband (rich and kind) in order to go back to her illstarred amour. Under the strain of this trend greater "realism" in sex stories, the American Legion of Decency finds occasion to rate more and more of Hollywood's pictures as "objectionable in part". These may not be supported without discrimination by practical Catholics in America.

At the same time increasing difficulties arise from the importation of a number of European film productions.

"Volpone" arrived on Broadway and was forthright condemned by the Legion, which means no practical Catholic may see it at all. "Furia" came from Italy to provoke the same response, but after numerous cuts was re-classified by the Legion as "objectionable in part".

"Fanny", "L'Atalante", "Panique", "Portrait of a Woman" and "Jenny Lamour" ("Quai des Orfevres") from France aroused Legion objections, as did "Jassy" and "Frieda" from Britain and "Open City" and "Shoeshine" from Italy. By far the greater number of films now coming into America from Europe are receiving adverse ratings from the Legion of Decency.

They also are being shown chiefly in specialized theaters, the object being to create a "cult" for foreign films. People who regularly go to the movies are thus expected to prefer American ones and only those who are peculiar enough to approach films from an intellectual or study angle will see foreign pictures. This design is fostered by the American Motion Picture Producers Association and not by the Legion of Decency which rates films only on their

There is, however, no disposition on the part of the Legion to regard foreign films as reporters upon moral attitudes generally recognized in other countries. It is insisted that for American audiences, only American conventions can be acceptable. Foreign films, like those made in Hollywood must comply with the self-imposed production Code, which some Hollywood producers insist, has placed them at a disadvantage in competing with the realistic type of movie entertainment attempted by their European rivals and now often admitted to the U.S. A.\*)

To preserve the disciplinary forces of the Code and the Legion of Decency, an even more stringent application of rules is being enforced.

Meanwhile, however, confusion and uncertainty hold the major Hollywood producers in grip. Twentieth Century-Fox have completed "The Iron Curtain" first of the anti-Communist pictures to be attempted. This, it is claimed, is documentary and deals only with facts gathered from official FBI files, regarding attempted espionage in the USA and Canada, by Soviet agents. That it may well be followed by any number of anti-communist stories of fictional or semi-fictional character, opens up a question of whether Hollywood can generate any constructive values to the end of promoting better international understandings.

The Hollywood industry has recently hunted out a number of known Communist sympathisers from among its creative talent groups. Ten men were suspended, after recent charges that they were in contempt of an official Government Committee when they refused to answer directly wheter they are, or have ever been, members of the Communist Party. A "lean backwards away from the left" attitude has resulted.

Even in the new MGM screenplay, "B. F's Daughter", starring Barbara Stanwyck with Van Heslin and Charles Coburn, the fight between capitalism and communism is dealt with quite superficially and this is one of very few pictures even to so much as touch upon the vital issues of our present times.

Refuge has been taken and is being taken even more in such items as "State of the Union", a light political satire dealing with domestic aspects of America's political party machinery and outright comedies such as "I Remember Mama". The first, a Capra satire, stars Spencer Tracy with Katharine Hepburn, Adolphe Menjou and Van Johnson, and the latter presents Irene Dunne as Mama and Philip Dorn as Papa in a family adventure.

Religious themes meanwhile are held in check by fears that religion leads to sidereal discussion at least of other more controversial subjects. "The Robe" for instance, still is held up because the script prepared by Albert Maltz, one of the writers mixed up with the recent communist inquiry and still, as I write, to be tried for contempt of Congress, is not ,,quite satisfactory".

John Farrow, Catholic director and husband of film star Maureen O'Sullivan, recently prepared a screen treat-ment of "The Son of Man" which tells the life story of Our Lord. Just when it looked as if his independent production company had all the backing it needed, including a guarantee of wide general release, negotiations "broke down". He had been asked if he would present the character of Christ as a Divinity and when he replied with an emphatic "yes, of course", the arrangements suddenly broke down! This attitude towards religion on the screen has intensified since Hollywood stiffened its attitude towards the leftists in its midst. Whether this is direct consequence or coincidence one cannot prove, but it seems certain that the alignment of forces pro and anti-Christ, which go on all over the world, have their counterparts in Hollywood.

Only one picture dealing incidentally with the Catholic faith -,, The Miracle of the Bells" - has emerged this year. \*\*) It stars Fred MacMurray and Alida Valli, with Frank Sinatra playing a young priest. The tale is about a poor girl who suddenly becomes a Hollywood star but dies before her first film can be released. A press agent (MacMurray) determined to force posthumous recognition of her ability, gets, the Church bells rung for three days and nights in her local town, resultant publicity, coupled with news that ,,a miracle has happened in the Church during her funeral Mass", works the trick. Actually there was no miracle as the film plainly shows. When statues moved to face the coffin, it was all due to a subsidence of the earth. The town was a mining place. No serious treatment of religion. No serious treatment of anything at present.

Hollywood would like to know what Europe and the rest of the world may be demanding by way of movie entertainment one year — even six months — from now. And no one in Hollywood seems to have the answer.

William H. Mooring

<sup>\*)</sup> On the other side, some American pictures receive more severe ratings by the Catholic Film Centres in Europe (Editor's Note).

<sup>\*)</sup> This article was written before "Jane of Arc" was completed (Editor's Note).

Mrs. James F. LOORAM

Chairman of the Motion Picture Department,

International Federation of Catholic Alumnae

(official reviewing group of the National Legion of Decency),

New York.

AIMS OF THE

## LEGION OF DECENCY

A world without a moral order is a sailor without a compass. Such a world when dealing with human relations on whatever level, community, national or international, inevitably resorts to formulae and devices. Finally it comes to place its whole dependence upon them. In that field of action the question as to what is right is seldom asked because those principles of the moral order wich define what is right and what is wrong have long since been rejected.

We do not have to search far to discover the unwholesome results of such dependence upon formulae and devices, wether it be in the wide area of international relations or in the narrow confines of community relations. Its mark is left upon the brutalized and enslaved peoples of Eeastern Europe and upon the godless and disinherited youth of communities in the Western world.

A distorted moral prospective leaves an impress upon all opinion forming agencies, the press, literature, radio, stage and motion pictures. These agencies, in turn, enormously propagate the contagion increasing the ranks of those who, to their own and the world's misery, reject the moral order as the fundamental rule of life. All these agencies in their potent effect upon the public mind become instrumentalities which must encreasingly be made the object of careful, expert and articulate attention by Catholic men and women — men and women who know that observance of the moral law is the first line of defence of the very existence of the nation itself.

Towering against the philosophic and moral error which lies at the root of the distorted moral prospective of the entertainment world we have the clear and exact counsel of our late Holy Father, Pope Pius X I, who in his Encyclical on Motion Pictures tells us that, "the essential purpose of art is to assist in the perfection of the moral personality which is men, and for this reason art itself must be moral."

The current year, it is appropriate to recall, marks the 12th anniversary of the occasion upon which Pius XI made the Catholic world the beneficiary of the encyclical devoted to the subject of motion pictures. In that renowned document mention is made of the work accomplished by the Bishops of the United States in the maintenance of a more moral screen.

The Bishops of the United States, alert to their responsibility, became gravely concerned over the inroads and impact motion pictures were making upon souls and moral standards. In October 1933, the Apostolic Delegate, his Excellency, the Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, at a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities in New York, sent forth the call to action. The Bishops at their meeting in November of the same year responded by appointing a Committee to study the evils of the cinema and explore methods of combating them.

It was in April 1934, that the Legion of Decency was formally launched. In support and furtherance of the movement, the Bishops of America wrote pastoral letters; priests preached sermons; laymen gave addresses; the children of the Catholic schools encouraged by Sisters and Brothers, parish priests and diocesan superintendents, banded together in visible protest, societies and fraternal orders rallied their members to the cause; the radio and secular press were utilised as far as practicable. Persons and organizations of the Protestant and Jewish faiths cooperated.

From the beginning of the movement, the Catholic press cooperated with the Hierarchy and accorded splendid support to the Episcopal Committee. The three hundred and ten Catholic newspapers and periodicals having a combined circulation of more than seven million, began an important and vigourous agitation by means of news items, editorials and articles.

An immediate effect of this campaign was the crystallization of public opinion into an insistent

demand for improvement in the moral character of films.

This weight of public opinion aroused and articulated by the Legion of Decency, was a very strong factor in moving the industry in the United States to effect an application of the Production Code in a spirit and with a determination not previously experienced.

The Code expresses a system of voluntary self-regulation on the part of the industry to have pictures made right or reasonably so at the source of production. This System comprising a working adaptation of objective morality to motion pictures production was originated by Mr. Martin Quigley, editor and publisher of several industry trade papers. The document which became the Motion Picture Production Code was prepared by the Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J., in collaboration with Mr. Quigley.

That the Production Code is not a cure-all for the moral ill to which motion pictures are subject must, of course, be freely recognised. Necessarily the principles which it presents are subject to interpretation — human interpretation. The nature of the work admits of a great area for differences of opinion. Then also there are those to content with who offer perhaps lip-service but no allegiance to the principles the Code seeks to uphold.

But for a decade and a half practically all the motion pictures produced in the United States have been subject to a wholesome and constructive influence under the operations of the Code. While a millenium has not been reached, it is a matter of common knowledge that many desirable results have been attained and many threatening evils have been avoided.

Motion pictures are a most popular and universal medium of entertainment. Moreover, as Pius XI of blessed memory pointed out in his encyclical "VIGI-LANTI CURA", "there exists today, no means of influencing the masses more potent than the cinema." He pointed out also, "its vast influence alike in the promotion of good and the insinuation of evil." Charity and prudence therefore would dictate that all individuals, and especially parents and those having in their charge children and adolescents, inform themselves of the moral nature of a film before seeing, or allowing their charges to see, individual motion pictures. The consequent obligation to avoid certain films is the same as the obligation to avoid occasions of sin. The gravity of the obligation will depend upon the gravity of the danger to which a person deliberately or carelessly exposes himself or allows others to do so.

As a guide and help in the formation of a right conscience in this matter, the National Legion of Decency issues classifications of feature films biweekly. These are grouped into the following classes:

A-I. Morally unobjectionable for general patronage. A.-II. Morally unobjectionable for adults. — Films in this classification are not approved for children because a discerning and mature judgment is necessary if one is to view such films without danger to Christian morals or principles. One becomes an adult when by virtue of years, training and experience an ability for mature and sound judgment is acquired.

B. Morally objectionable in part for all. — Such films are objectionable for all, adults and children alike. They are so classified because an element or elements in the film are opposed to Christian principles of decency and morality. When a film is classified as "B", the reason for such rating is always given.

It is recommended that all Catholics avoid attending these films. The obligation to do so is grave or light dependent on whether the objectionable element in the film constitutes a proximate or remote occasion of sin. Moreover, indiscriminate attendance at "B" films, by those who are in a position of authority such as parents, leaders in the community, etc., can be a source of scandal to those who look to them for guidance and example. Again, attendance at these films encourages the further production of such motion pictures and hence contributes to the decline of the moral fibre of the cinema. Therefore, no one should consider himself immune to the harmful influence of "B" films.

C. — Condemned. Films in this category are totally opposed in theme or treatment or both, to Christian principles of morality and decency. All Catholics should avoid them.

"Separately classified". Occasionally the subject matter and treatment of a film is such as to preclude classification in any of the foregoing groups. For although theme and treatment of these films are not condemnable, they are unsuitable because of the subject matter for presentation in entertainment theatres before general audience. Films of this kind should be avoided unless exhibited with proper safeguards and controls.

The moral quality of motion pictures is the sole concern of the Legion of Decency. Conformity or non-conformity to Christian principles of morality and decency is the only standard of criticism. The Legion is not concerned with the artistic, the dramatic or technical merits or demerits of the film.

Were the Legion to set itself up as an agency through which the films might be criticized from an artistic, entertainment and technical viewpoint there would be two very serious results. First, the power and influence of the Legion would be greatly weakened and secondly, confusion would be created among those who would misunderstand an artistic or entertainment appraisal as an appeal by the Legion. For instances, films like «BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES», «GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT» and «THE IMMORTAL SERGEANT» had in the opinion of many competent critics high artistic and enter-

tainment values. Yet, the first two reflected the acceptability of divorce and the letter was a glorification of suicide.

The Legion addresses itself to arousing public opinion in behalf of standards of decency and morality in motion picture entertainment, to informing Catholics and all interested about the potential moral danger of the screen and about films noxious to moral life, to stimulating public instance on cinema decency and morality, and to recalling the industry to an appreciation of its grave responsability.

The personnel of the Legion of Decency in the broad sense of the word, theoretically comprises all Catholics in the United States, for they are expected to take the pledge and adhere to it. It also includes many non-Catholics, both individuals and groups who are concerned with the decency of motion pictures. Thus the Legion is equipped with many millions of decent-minded citizens who undertake to aid the Legion in its pursuance of standards of decency in this particular sphere of group entertainment.

The executive personnel of the Legion is directly controlled by the Episcopal Committee an Motion Pictures which now consists of Bishop Scully, Chairman, and Bishops Albers, McEntegard, Kearney and McGucken. In 1936, the direct administration of the Legion's activities was made the respon-

sibility of the Archdiocese of New York. Reverend Patrick J. Masterson, a priest of the New York Archdiocese, is the Executive Secretary and Reverend Thomas F. Little, S.T.L., a priest of the Brooklyn Diocese, is the Assistant Executive Secretary. The reviewing personnel is under the direction of Mrs. James F. Looram, the Chairman of the Motion Picture Department of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae. The Alumnae previously to the establishment of the Legion manifested positive concern regarding the morality of motion pictures, and consistently worked for betterment in that regard. The Review Committee is comprised of sixty members in New York and twenty-eight members in Hollywood.

To aid and advise in matters affecting the moral evaluation of films there is a board of consultors composed of Priests and laity.

On the whole, the motion picture industry has been quite co-operative with this personnel and has afforded them every consideration, for the industry is aware of the tremendous influence the Legion has in bringing proper and effective pressure upon any motion picture producer or distributor who flaunts the standards of decency. The effectiveness of the Legion in terms of unobjectionable films is evidenced by the following analysis:

#### COMPARATIVE STATISTICS ON FEATURE PICTURES REVIEWED AND CLASSIFIED

	Class A-I		Class A-2		Class B		Class C		Separately Class.		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
A.	780	61	380	30	98	8	13	1	0	0	1.271
B.	332	62	164	31	32	6	5	1	2	0,37	535
C.	312	54	200	35	50	9	9	1,67	2	0,33	573
D.	271	50	210	39	47	9	10	2	1 1	0,18	539
E.	267	51,25	197	37,81	50	9,6	7	1,34	0	0	521
F.	271	51,15	202	38,11	51	9,62	5	0,95	1	0,19	530
G.	229	52,16	151	34,40	55	12,53	4	0,91	0	0	439
H.	191	44,52	184	42,89	51	11,89	3	0,70	0	0 1	429
I.	143	38,1	189	50,4	43	11,5	0	0	0	0	375
T.	155	39,64	176	45,01	60	15,35	0	0	0	0	391
K.	195	44,32	172	39,09	70	15,91	3	0,68	0	0	440

A. February 1936 — November 1937
B. November 1937 — November 1938

C. November 1938 — November 1939

D. November 1939 — November 1940E. November 1940 — November 1941

F. November 1941 — November 1941 F. November 1941 — November 1942

G. November 1942 — November 1943
 H. November 1943 — November 1944

I. November 1943 — November 1944 I. November 1944 — November 1945

J. November 1945 — November 1946 K. November 1946 — November 1947 In appraising the moral status and trend of the motion picture, statistics alone do not provide adequate and final measurement. Statistics should be considered in conjunction with other factors such as the kind and amount of objectionableness in a film rated in any given objectionable or condemned category. The evaluation of the situation must be based on qualitative as well as quantitative consideration.

James F. Looram

#### A GREAT PICTURE:

## Joan of Arc

#### HOW IT WAS PRODUCED

by Paul DONCOEUR, S. J.

The Film's Historical Adviser Chaplain, Union Catholique du Cinéma, Paris

The fact that America has devoted \$4.600.000 to painting a new picture of «JOAN OF ARC» on all the screens of the world is worthy of reflection. The Americans declare that there has never been a comparable effort, and certainly such prodigality of money, talent, hard work, determination and ardent enthusiasm has been unequalled since the war. Hollywood's wealth of technical experience alone must have been of inestimable value.

What will this «JOAN OF ARC» be like? Will the technicolor satisfy? Will the film represent a check in the career of Victor Fleming, or will he emerge triumphant from the great adventure? Will Ingrid Bergman manage to convey the unfathomable depths of the saintly girl's mysterious soul? Will the author, director, wardrobe mistress, lighting technicians, architects, cameramen and musical director, in whose hands she has been placed sustain her fervour? Will they serve her or will they betray her? Not having seen the final edited version, I cannot pronounce an opinion, but I must confess to some apprehension.

I believe that I know Joan of Arc a little, having spent years in meditating on her mystery. I am aware of the rare tenderness and luminous transparency of Ingrid Bergman. I can affirm that a great respect permeates the film, and that it has great visual beauty. But will our expectations be realised, disappointed or exceeded? A saying of Kierkegaard comes to mind and fills me with apprehension. "A festival" he writes, "is a truly hazar-

dous enterprise: no matter how much taste and talent are lavished upon it, there still remains one essential element; I mean luck." Undoubtely luck is a gift from heaven, a favour from the gods which cannot be produced at will to set the seal upon a work of art.

Will «JOAN OF ARC» be thus blessed? No one can say.

In setting down the reason for my anxiety, I have no wish to judge before the event. If the result turns out to be a triumph, no one will be more delighted.

It is not so much any possible weakness of production which troubles me, but the fact that the more I consider the historical film the more dangerous does it, of its very nature, appear.

The chief problem connected with the historical film lies in the sphere of accuracy. Its aim is to revivify places, people, surroundings, style, in a word, the past, by means of an archaeologically exact image. The critics, for instance, have not failed bitterly to reproach the historical inexactitudes of «MONSIEUR VINCENT», and to decry the liberties taken with facts in the interests of dramatic effect or to ram home an argument.

Similarly, in the theatre Maxwell Anderson's «JOAN OF LORRAINE» was merely the pretext for the presentation of a state of conscience completely alien to Joan. In the same way, Bernard Shaw's Joan has become a Protestant, whom the Church has dared to canonise. Such more or less harmless fantasies, based on ignorance, provide an opportunity for indignation and sarcasm of which the well-informed critic is not slow to avail himself.

What can be criticised in Maurice Cloche's «VINCENT», or in the English «HENRY V»? What, from the historical point of view, will be condemned in Victor Fleming's «JOAN OF ARC»? Dare I say that this is not the essential point?

Accurate though these films may be, the very fact of their recourse to the past worries me. I am not sure that what is tolerable on the stage remains so on the screen. Except in the realm of fantasy, as in



## SHAKESPEARE ON THE SCREEN



HAMLET

LAURENCE OLIVIER

MACBETH

ORSON WELLES



«LA BELLE ET LA BÊTE», the screen makes promises that it cannot match with performance: it sets out to re-create before my eyes a vanished world, the charm of which is rendered more potent by a painstaking reconstruction of the past.

The greater the accuracy of reconstruction, the greater to my mind the lie, the betrayal and the deception. I cannot accept the studio Notre Dame de Paris, or Syracuse, or Nero's arena, or Elsinore. And it is no use saying that location shots taken outside the Studio, on the banks of the Tiber or the Loire will make the presentation of an epoch any truer. For I am always aware that neither actors nor stars are really the heroes nor the armies they impersonate. The greater the effort to persuade, the shorter it falls of success.

So true is this that in the «MONSIEUR VIN-CENT» scenario the least good, one might say the intolerable scenes — such as the false duel between pseudo-musketeers, or the unreal dignities of an unreal Richelieu — are those which aim at a presentation of period. The only really moving scenes are those which the scenario describes as "almost timeless" — "with decors and costumes which might be used to-day".

Only when I can feel that the people before me are part and parcel of the world of to-day and recognise them as my contemporaries can I forget that I am watching actors: when I feel that their wretchedness, their tragedies, their ridicule and their sufferings are, in a word, ageless, eternal.

In a realistic sense, this entails the virtual renunciation of history, and a turning to Racine, Corneille, Shakespeare, in order to learn to read Tacitus, where I shall find the real man, shorn of all decaying framework.

It is the timelessness of Pierre Fresnay's Vincent de Paul that endows it with such power of tragedy.

If there is any truth in this, the best parts of «JOAN OF ARC» will be the scenes in which we are with Joan amongst the Domrémy peasants, or in the solitude of an ageless cell, which we shall hardly even notice. The most controversial scenes will be those in which the clash of armour and arquebus cry out that all is artifice, straight from the Hollywood stock.

At Beverly Hills Jean Renoir is saying that the salvation of the cinema lies in frugality of production. He is right. The shedding of false splendours will facilitate the study of human beings; the renunciation of facile successes will bring the cinema face to face with the inner heart of man.

If the cinema is ever to become a great art, that, I am convinced, is the essential condition.

#### HOW IT WAS WELCOMED

by William H. MOORING

I see three hundred to four hundred films a year. Mostly with picked audiences. The Hollywood people do not like a critic to see a motion picture "cold". He must be subject to the influence not alone of the film he is seeing, but of the reactions of others around him who also are seeing the film. They showed me "JOAN OF ARC" in a small studio projection room. Only four were present, Father Thomas McCarthy, editor of "The Tidings", Catholic organ of Los Angeles, myself and our respective secretaries.

For once, the film people knew that the film itself would be enough. It was. As the last scene of Joan's glorious death in the flames passed from the screen and the sound of Bergman's voice passionately intoning the sweet name of Jesus passed into silence, the lights came on. For two minutes that seemed like the ages no one spoke. It was as if we had been hushed by the touch of visitant angels. "JOAN OF ARC" emerges as a motion picture, outstanding among all others, that will defy the years. It has no date. Its message is an eternal one.

The critic thinks first of the triumph of artists. Of Ingrid Bergman's powerful portrayal of the simple Maid become Saint. Of the foresight of producer Walter Wanger, always struggling to make a great picture yet never until now quite succesful. Of Victor Fleming's sensitive direction as he drew together sequences of history and fashioned them into a harmonious whole resonant of good and evil; of the human and Divine. To the self-effacing Father Paul Doncoeur, S. J. of Paris, foremost living authority on the Maid of Orléans, and to Jules Quicherat whose record of St. Joan's trial he consulted as technical advisor on the film, glowing credit is due. Then at last the critic perceives that the true greatness of this screenplay which will enthrall millions who believe and millions more who doubt, derives not from human ingenuity even though this has been applied technically and artistically to the ultimate. It derives from the glory of a story fashioned of everlasting truth; the story of God's love for a lowly creature to whom He intrusted high missions; the story of a poor girl whom He enriched with the virtues of a martyr; the story of a Saint who showed us anew how He carried His Cross and how we must try to carry ours.

It is as simple as that. In this motion picture there is no grovelling after sensation, yet it thrills the very soul. There is no hiding of unpleasant facts, for those who persecuted the Maid are seen as a realistic factor in the story as a whole. There could have been no martyr without a fire: no Saint without the sin of mankind against which to contend. Even among those who had pledged their lives to the service of God, there was weakness: some of His servants, like some of His first disciples, doubted and betrayed. They betrayed His humble Saint by whose glorious death His promise of life everlasting was held forth anew. "JOAN OF ARC" seen by a critic in a tiny Hollywood projection room, shone out at once as more than a mere experiment in filmcraft, made, as films are, for the gains it can bring. It shone out as a sudden shaft of light and inspiration to remind all in these dark troublous days, that leadership is born only of self sacrifice; that victory is a thing alone for the spirit; that the meek shall indeed inherit the earth and the pure of heart find heaven. "JOAN OF ARC" is a great film. More importantly it is a great and glowing exposition of neglected truth: the truth which alone can set men free.

It is impossible in reasonable space, to give a detailed review of this film which traces the glorious path of Joan from the time when as a simple peasant girl she heard her "voices", to the moment when, as a martyr for Christ, she felt the flames. Ingrid Bergman realizes her ambition to play Joan. She does play Joan as surely no other living actress could. Nothing of importance is left out of the story. It moves from Lorraine in December of 1428 to Vaucouleurs, thence to the Court of Charles VII at Chinon, on to the Battle of Orleans in May, 1429, to the great climax of Joan's trial at Rouen in 1431 and her glorious martyrdom. Each sequence, gliding or sweeping from another, introduces a brilliant cast of its own. Each role, large or small, is filled in as an artist might touch pigment to canvas for inspired achievement of a harmonius whole.

There are highlights of course. Notable among them the Maid's search for the Dauphin in the jeering, crowded Court at Chinon; her child-like jov when she sees der Dauphin crowned King; the thrilling scenes of her leadership in battle; her calm and unshakable faith as she defends herself at trial and her last final gasping of the sweet name of Jesus

as she dies. Yet all the film is moving and moves to dignify the term "motion picture."

Those who saw Bergman in Maxwell Anderson's stageplay, "JOAN OF LORRAINE", will, after seeing the film, likely applaud the changes made by Anderson and his collaborator, Andrew Solt. Apart from Joan herself, there is nothing of the play in the picture, or if there is, then it is absorbed or submerged by this vastly more significant treatment in the screen medium.

To mention even the leading players who distinguish themselves would take too long, but among them the following are outstanding: Francis L. Sullivan as Pierre Cauchon, Count-Bishop of Beauvais. He was Joan's implacable persecutor and if any should fail to distinguish clearly between the Eternal strength of Mother Church and the passing frailties of those who serve Her, the Bishop of Beauvais will appear a detractor of the Faith. He is cruelly and powerfully portrayed. José Ferrer is brilliant as the Dauphin who became Charles VII of France. John Emery as his cousin, Gene Lockhart as his Chief Counsellor, Richard Ney as the Duke of Clermont, Frederic Worlock as England's Regent the Duke of Bedford, Colin Keith-Johnson as the Duke of Burgundy and J. Carrol Naish as the rascally one-eyed Count of Luxembourg, strike one as particularly fine. But then so are Shepperd Strudwick as Father Massieu, Joan's Bailiff; Taylor Holmes as the Bishop of Avranches; Houseley Stevenson as the Cardinal of Winchester and Cecil Kellaway as Jean Le Maistre, Inquisitor of Rouen.

Technicolor has never before been used to such effect; costumes and settings are superb and in every technical department new high levels of excellence have been set for Hollywood to follow — if it can. No one should miss "JOAN OF ARC". Those who usually stay away from movies because they consider them time and money wasters should try again, starting with this. It is a motion picture the like of which we have not seen before, and may not see again for many years to come.\*)

<sup>\*)</sup> After the Broadway Premiere some critical appreciations appeared in the Press. We 'ask all our correspondents to keep us informed about the reception reserved to this great picture in different countries. (Editor's Note).



Jean De BONGNIE

A PROFILE

Editor, French Edition "Documentation Cinématographique de la Presse" (DO. CI. P.), Brussels, Film critic on "La Métropole", Antwerp.

### Orson WELLES, Immaterialist

This man drives a delineator to despair, if one can apply words used about a small, delicate flower to this noisy and active colossus.

A globe-trotter ever since the days when he was in short pants - a period he spent playing truant all over America, Europe and Africa; the holder of the record for self-publicity since his well known radio broadcast on the Invasion by the Martians, a broadcast which resulted in his immediate dismissal but which also carried his name to the ends of the earth; a man who enjoys life to the fullest extent, who is determined to make the most of every second, spending his week-ends now in one capital now in another and catching his planes as the ordinary man catches his bus; the most outstanding of excentrics, rushing through towns in his car with the wailing screech of a fire engine's siren; a superman who, in his first film, launched an attack on a Press King controlling dozens of newspapers; the man who revolutionised the editing of films, camera angles, the harmony of visuals and aurals and even production. Orson Welles is all of these and much more besides. Men thought that they knew something of his complex make up of bluff, inventiveness, commercial flair, power and brilliance. But now, at the Festival in Venice, it appears that this "wonderboy" — who took to himself the Pin Up Queen of the Americas — is really a spiritually minded man, an immate-

"Tragedy: that was my word".

This could sum up what he said both in his many interviews and at his Press Conference.

Another article in this Review emphasized how much Welles's assertion is proved correct. Through the use of moonlit scenery, by means of a series of clanging sounds, of dress and weapons pertaining to wild peoples and through the savage acting of Orson Welles, "MACBETH" surely is a tragedy in the true sense of the word "inspiring both horror and pity". In its development the play resembles those of the Ancient Greeks in the part that is played in it by fate.

#### A FORCEFUL CHARACTER

It is easier to see from a distance why Orson Welles was so insistant on the word tragedy. He is absorbed with the forces that overhang men's lives because to him this is not a topic chosen haphazard from among many others, but it is the essential subject.

Men with creative power may long be controlled by impulses that they cannot explain until a day comes when some newly read masterpiece throws light on the innermost reasons for the course they have adopted. "MACBETH" seems to play this role in Orson Welles's life. Ever since the time of his youth, Orson Welles, with his greed that would make him devour the world itself, appears as one of those men whom the Scriptures would qualify as being of forceful character.

His "CITIZEN KANE" (largely autobiographical), that megalomaniac who cannot be satisfied with the paltry ups and downs of his various love affairs, who tightly controls his will for power, attacks destiny itself. Psychological drama or philosophy are not enough for him; he must have tragedy. He is above the particular. The singer is only a pawn; and his friend the art critic is but another. Kane could have behaved differently, but had he done so, the piece would have become mere anecdote. He loyally follows destiny (going on, for instance, with the article of his friend the critic, that will destroy himself showing thereby that he rises above personalities). And this course brings him to the tragic isolation of the defeated man, an isolation from which finally arises a nostalgic longing for his childhood. It is quite possible that the broken potentate is seeking among the treasures accumulated in that period of his existance — which is so deeply sensitive to the reality behind appearances — for that which is so vitally lacking in his present life. The fact that Orson Welles leaves this undefined is doubtless a reflection of his own spiritual state.

"MACBETH" also helps us to understand "THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI", by this is meant not the plot that any detective film must have, but all that Orson Welles himself added to it and which was puzzling when the film was shown. We mean the retorts breathing fatalism, comments in undertones - whispers of the very soul itself — about Good and Evil; we also mean Orson Welles's acting which heralds what he will do in "MACBETH". He already shows us the waverings of a man who has hidden problems nagging at him; even now he does not look at his companion but through her, questioning Fate that stands beyond, and his glance instinctively rises heavenwards. From this point of view the last scene, at Luna-Park, shows him in his true colours. He wanders round thoughtfully near the woman who has been shot by her husband,

lost to the world and regardless of the dying woman in whom he sees only a manifestation of higher power; he then leaves her to go on to a dyke

where he faces the cleansing sweep of sea and sky.

Finally we get "MACBETH", a landmark
even in the eyes of its maker. Could it not now be said that this film well depicts the obscure urges that lie scattered over Welles's life and in his work?

#### TRAGEDY AND PROVIDENCE

Such would seem, in 1948, to have been the spiritual journey of Orson Welles.

The Greeks, whom he recalls in his treatment of "MACBETH", were not satisfied with a materialistic view of the world. They had many names for their feeling of the supernatural: the gods, the Moerae, fate, destiny etc... Seen in this light, tragedy appears to the Christian as the secular expression of Providence. Did not the Greeks themselves come very close to this idea?

The Revelation that came to us has removed the haze that hedged the Greek's idea of fate. Has this resulted in a loss of mystery? Is there a lessening of dramatic intensity? Claudelhas stated in his essays and shown us in his plays that religion, though it lays down certain boundaries, does bring, with the idea of Eternity, a tremendous dramatic propulsion and, through the appearence of grace, sorrow is replaced by joy. Pessimism is thus exchanged for optimism.

Will Orson Welles gradually turn from the Greek idea of tragedy to that of Divine Providence? He may do this at a later date perhaps, who knows? For the present Orson Welles, the son of an atheistic father and of a Catholic mother who had lost her faith, says that the world seems to him to be disjointed and man to

be heading for destruction.

Whatever path the seeker may follow in his spiritual quest it must be recognised that though superficially it may seem otherwise, he is fundamentally upright and exactingly rigorous towards himself. While visiting Europe this hundred per cent American does not avoid contact with latin thought, on the contrary he seeks it. It would indeed be an interesting study to trace the influence that our philosophers, our thinkers and even our mystics have had on him \*). Perhaps his task is to combine in himself the technical and youthful spirit of America and our own wrestling with intellectual problems.

#### SPIRITUAL ASPIRATION VERSUS FORMALISM AND REALISM

The practising Christian who is familiar with the sacramental life of the Church, who is imbued with the teaching of the Gospel and attuned to

\*) In Venice, Orson Welles told Father Morlion that he had read Ruysbrock, Catherine, Theresa.

the highest aspirations of the Psalms, feels out of place in our modern cinemas which can offer only vanity, scenes void of God, pieces of dilettantism, slices of life which seem rather to be slices of death since the life depicted is so warped and stunted. By escaping these limitations Orson Welles brings joy to the Christian heart.

He takes a definite stand against formalism

and realism.

In Venice he was almost vehement in rejecting the view of those critics who were inclined to see in him but a stylist. In agreement with the strictest of our teachers, Orson Welles insists: "The subject first! Defer to the subject!"

Now, when formalism contaminates the most gifted of our cineasts, John Ford, Bresson, Cocteau, Visconti and many others, this recall to common sense, coming as it does from Orson Welles the excentric, has an almost

piquant flavour.

Orson Welles's reaction against realism is even more fundamental. He brings the strictest censure to bear on the school of thought that has been called Italian Neo-Realism and especially on Rosselliniand on Visconti. Doubtless through being in the business himself that director can foresee more clearly that realism cannot stay the pace. Do not the Italian directors themselves show how right he is, since some are trying to escape from realism while others endeavour to graft to it new ideas?

An unbridgeable chasm lies between Welles's search for exaltation and the consciously arranged naturalism of Clouzot, of Duvivier or of Decoin. The mere mention of these few names helps to throw light on the full implications of the position taken up by Welles.
Whether this attitude of Welles's will

influence future productions is a nice question. "MACBETH" is a stern piece, a film for cultured audiences. There can be non question of putting it in the same category as such popular pieces as "GOING MY WAY" which give rise to so many imitations. On the other hand ,,MAC-BETH" will assuredly influence cineasts, directors and scenario writers, as well as the ever increasing number of cinema lovers; and also the specialised Film Reviews, which are more influential than is generally supposed, especially with the cineasts \*themselves.

Even more important than the film itself is the course adopted by its maker. It would make an interesting study to discover how great was the part played by his dynamic energy in Welles's success. The cinema requires not only ideas but vigour to bring them into tangible being. Many lack this driving force; in Welles it overflows.

In conclusion, we may well expect Orson the Immaterialist to have a slow but sure effect on the best type of film. J. De Bongnie

### LATIN AMERICA

Jaime POTENZE
Film critic on "Criterio", Buenos Aires.

### THE SUBJECT

#### THE WEAK POINT OF THE ARGENTINE CINEMA

The Argentine Cinema has already achieved remarkable results, but a great deal still remains to be done. Its development has been more rapid than that of other arts because it has received more brilliant and better contributions. But an absence of orientation remains its distinctive feature.

It lacks above all "Argentineity". Foreign scenario-writers and producers take a deep interest in the national character of their films. They do so under the influence of justified prejudices, a wish to make use of the picturesqueness of their native lands, they are impelled by a genuine love of their countries. Such a hope is often disappointed as far as the Argentine film production is concerned. Thus it could happen that, in the course of the formal distribution of the prizes which had been awarded by the Association of Critics for the best Argentine film of the year, the Mexican actor Jorge Negrete appeared with a prize offered for the most authentically Argentine subject

The critics were not little embarassed by the gesture of this artist, for only one of the films shown in the course of the year had a national subject, and this was, moreover, of mediocre quality. This foreigner has obliged us, perhaps unconsciously, to examine our consciences. A way was found out of the difficulty by the critics who voted for «DONDE MUE-REN LAS PALABRAS» («Where The Worlds Die»), since, it was said, it gave expression to what is most valuable in our national culture. The critics lied consciously, for this culture was represented in the film by the choreography of the Viennese ballet-mistress Margarita Wallmann, by Beethoven's VIIth Symphony, and by a presentation of the Italian director Vittorio Podrecca's famous Piccoli.

Subsequently there appeared a kind of reaction against this lack of a purely national character in our films. But this reaction failed to be really efficient, and for a very simple reason: the difficulty in which we find ourselves to give a precise definition of this national chracter.

We all in the Argentine Republic are convinced of the necessity to "argentinize" the cinema and the theatre. But as soon as it becomes a question of achieving concrete results we seem to lack both precise ideas and a clear aim. Nationalism has no place in art; but the national element, however, does constitute a contribution which — however paradoxical this may seem to be — is of inestimable

value for the universality of the work. The Argentine people, formed by successive layers of immigrants, cannot for a long time have a well defined personality.

This is no reason for us to wait in unproductive quietude for the years to pass. On the contrary, it is an incentive for us to work in order to create the elements which will enable future generations to define the soul of the nation.

The cinema constitutes popular culture. Buenos Aires is the capital of the popular culture of South America just as Hollywood is the capital of the popular culture of the world, and Paris the capital of culture generally. We have, therefore, a tremendous responsibility. The fact that an international influence can be exercised by and through the cinema has not only been amply proved by the United States of America; but it was also quite recently demonstrated by Switzerland with two films which have placed her in the front-rank of the film-producing countries, and by Italy whose latest films have revealed horizons which fascism had tried to veil. «THE ROAD TO HEAVEN» — a Swedish production — is important enough by itself to establish the reputation of a country. Switzerland, Italy and Sweden can present to foreign audiences films which, although without subtitles are none the less highly esteemed. Mexico with «MARIA CANDELARIA» has also given proof of artistic maturity.

The Argentine producers at first took the right road with films such as «TRES HOMBRES DEL RIO» («Three Men From The River»), or «PRI-SIONEROS DE LA TIERRA» («Prisoners Of The Earth») which, while avoiding the mistake of an exaggerated picturesqueness, presented typically local aspects. But then they inexplicably deviated from this direction and preferred to produce adaptations of Oscar Wilde's «LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN», Tolstoi's «KREUTZER'S SONATA» and a Creole version of «THE WHITE HORSE».

However, we do not believe that it is so much the national climate of which the Argentine films are most in need as a deeper content. Hollywood seems to be gradually being put in the background as regards artistic quality. Europe, whose postwar cinema has taken its task so seriously, has once more taken the lead. This does not mean that the European cinema has become solemn and ponderous, but that in most cases it has understood the impor-

tance of the times in which we are living. Great Britain has given us «A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH», a document of high human value in which the traditional English talent and humour are combined to give expression to a genuine message of peace. Italy has emerged with «ROME OPEN CITY», which will remain a classic of the cinema. France has given us «MONSIEUR VINCENT». We are seldom disappointed by the European film. To what is this due? To the sufferings which the Europeans had to bear. Hollywood productions, on the contrary, show the effects of a superficial conception of war. It might be said that the world finds itself not at an unprecedented crossroads, but at a difficult corner. The third World-War furnishes the theme of all conversations. Spiritual values alone can save us from its horrors. The cinema can and must be an efficient means of action and of information towards this end. It is not impossible for the Argentine, placed in a privileged position, to cooperate in the pacification of people's minds. More is done for human fraternity by a film like «THIS WONDERFUL LIFE» than by a long series of speeches. If our producers interpreted their task in this spirit, if they aimed higher, and if they abandoned their prejudices about the supposedly bad taste of the public, they would be able to achieve magnificent things. Unfortunately, most of those who finance the Argentine film, are wanting in culture and take but little heed of the advice and suggestions given to them.

There exists a problem in the Argentine cinema, and it is useful for us to study its solutions. There are some who believe that a State monopoly is the remedy. However, to entrust the State with the management and administration of an Art is an error which can only strengthen the application of false totalitarian theories, the most dangerous instances of which have been given by Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, and Fascist Italy. In Argentine nobody approves such a thesis. The State cannot remain indifferent to this problem of culture, nevertheless one of its principal aims must be, to guarantee artistic freedom. An official Argentine cinema — whatever the political situation — would at once become a political instrument, as the radio is at present. On the other hand, the State would be wise to make documentary films dealing with the country and to show them both in Argentine and abroad. If we have anything original it is the peculiarities of our soil. The forest of Chaco, the lakes in the Terra del Fuego and Neuquen. There are in the country abundant film possibilities which have scarcely been touched. The government is occupied with other things. Our minister in Sweden presented in that country a series of Argentinian documentaries which have excited a lively interest. An excellent form of publicity.

Until now the Argentine film industry has prospered without subsidies. The dividends paid out bear witness to this. What would be the good of seeking help and thus endangering liberty? In France it has been possible to make «MONSEUR VINCENT» thanks to a system of small subscriptions. When the Argentinians realise that they are paying twice for bad films (since all money contributed by the State comes from the taxpayers) they protest and with reason.

The State should limit itself to guarding the cinema from pornographical films and taking care of the sanitary and security arrangements.

The most difficult thing, that is to say, the production of better films remains still to be done. Argentinian producers are so shortsighted that the poor films they provide do not even pay. What they might gain if they were to produce good films is an idea which seems to have escaped them.

How are films made in Argentine? Who are the screen writers? Unfortunately their names occur too often. And their tricks also. A clique of wealthy commercialists monopolise production with scenarios of dubious value. And as if this were not enough there are producers with a smattering of artistic ability who choose subjects which limit them economically. Some of these financiers act with a rare intuition as to public taste, but this, important as it may be, is not enough. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the subject is the most important element in a film. The screenwriter and the director perform a social duty. The chief fault of the Argentine cinema is in the choice of subject brought to the screen. This youthful country, full of possibilities, prefers to produce adaptations. One fears greatly for all that is Argentinian when a new production company begins its activities with a mediocre film on the life of a Spanish poet from a scenario written by two Spaniards; follows this with an Italian novel: continues with «THE MYSTERY OF THE YELLOW ROOM» by Gaston Leroux and carries on with a fantastic comedy by an English author.

When a fifth film was made, the existence of Argentine was ackowledged: a sixth, following the success of the other, is now promised with a plot that includes nine tangos!

We are not opposed to adaptations when the subjects presented preserve something of their original quality. The film critics expressed a fair verdict when they pointed out that no award for the best scenario was made in 1947. Unfortunately — and this is a sign of decadence — as a result of the protest of the writers, the critics did not maintain their position. They published a statement almost excusing their original attitude. Meanwhile this verdict remains valid.

Argentine has made some good films, some even excellent. In addition to those we have mentioned we may add «MILAGRO DE AMOR» («Miracle of Love») our most poetic film yet. When talking of

Argentinian subjects it is necessary to point out that certain kinds of subjects have not been dealt with; notably, fantasy, poetry and satire. Not even the ,,g a u c h e s c o". This is astonishing! Creole subjects, since they are properly speaking Argentinian, should have been able to replace American cowboy stories. - One of our grave problems is the flight from the country and the exodus to the city. Films like Renoir's «THE SOUTHERNER» adapted to our mentality, render the greatest service. The peasant, ill educated, easily impressed, sees on the screen Buenos Ayres as a city of cabarets and easy living. Naturally he dreams of life in the city, the attraction of which in increased by the cinema. If films were made which truly presented the land, nobility of agriculture, the traditions of the peasant etc.... country folk would be more ready to accomodate themselves to their proper position as exalted on the

No one in Argentine has yet grasped the fact that the cinema is before all else educative. It is become more than even necessary that filmology be studied at the Universities whether as a special section of the Fine Arts, or a department of the Faculty of Letters or as an independent chair. In the secondary schools also there ought to be a commentary on the three or four best films of the year. People read books and discuss them. Why should not the same be done with the films which are actually much more frequented by the students? In this way their critical sense

would be aroused and adolescents would be induced to seek for the reason why such and such a film pleased them. It may be objected that public taste will not be changed. Nothing is less certain. One of the "Penguin Film Reviews" tells of the astonishing results of a Course of Film Appreciation, organised at Biarritz at the end of the war by a North American University Centre.

What then is to be our response to the question: "What is wrong with the Argentine cinema?" It lacks the aesthetic and cinematographic culture which could oblige producers to make films of positive value. If the public demanded "A" films and refused to see "B" or "C" films, rest assured that they would soon be offered "A" films.

Even "B"-films (if we are not to dwell in an ivory tower, we must be neither naive nor precious) should aim higher and present simple subjects suitably treated. The problem is one of education and social understanding. The idealists, those who can, should enter the film industry. They should try to influence it. Until now the field has been left to the commercials. Perhaps the recent creation of a production society will encourage the idealists to action again. While waiting for the realisation of these hopes, let us see in the idea a presage of good to come. On the success of such an initiative depends the harmonious development of our youthful cinematographic culture.

Jaime Potenze

José Francisco COELHO

Film critic on "Jornal do Comercio" Rio de Janeiro.

#### THE TRENDS OF FILM PRODUCTION

### IN BRAZIL

Until quite recently films in Brazil were the work of private enterprise. I am referring to the few films, — about ten, — which are worthy at least of being regarded as the result of a studied effort, from the artistic and even technical point of view. These were our true cinema, that which is reckoned, or could be reckoned as mattering among the numerous films which were made here. They were few, but despite their mistakes and weaknesses they reveal definite qualities: a sense of dialogue, rhythm, continuity, and atmosphere. They are experimental cinema, which we can consider, or at least recall, without alarm. All the other films made in Brazil, indiscriminately, were small unpretentious comedies and filmed variety, destined only to cater for the easy laughter of undiscerning audiences. It would be both

impossible and useless to comment further on this type of film, of which there is now a regular annual production. They teach us nothing, and have nothing profitable to offer as a spectacle.

Those who were responsible for those few Brazilian films which can rank in the chronicles of our cinema were sensitive persons, endowed with a consciousness of the possibilities of cinematographic expression. They concerned themselves with aesthetic discussions on the construction of a scenario, rhythm and dramatic continuity, cutting and editing, plastic composition, as they were revealed by the critics and directors of the new French, Russian, German, or American films. We were then in 1928 and 1929.

The first film clubs appeared around this time in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and during their

existence, short though it was, closely followed all the news published in European books and reviews, as well as the commentaries which accompanied the launching of big films in America or Europe: for example, Von Stroheim's «WEDDING MARCH», Dupont's «MOULIN ROUGE», Sternberg's «ROMANCE», Dreyer's «JOAN OF ARC», Lubitsch's «THE PATRIOT», or Hans Schwartz's «DIE LUGE VON NINA PETROVNA». When in 1929 these films were shown here, they were much discussed, opinions being divided between unrestricted applause and reservations formulated by audiences to some degree filmminded.

It is impossible to overlook the influence of the "Chaplin Club", film club founded in Rio in 1929 by Octavio de Faria (today a novelist of exceptional standing in contemporary literature), author of «TRAGEDIA BURGUESA», Plinio Sussekind Rocha, Almir de Castro and Claudio Melo, who published furthermore a review («OFAN») with discussions, essays, and critical studies of films, which even today when old issues are reread, constitute a considerable repertory and excellent commentary of the best films then being made in Europe and even in America. Good directors and their ideas became known.

The influence of this youthful group aroused here a lively interest in the possibilities which the film offered as an art medium. Any film then made in Brazil had to face up to a severe test, and the producers did not remain unaffected by the atmosphere created by these conscientious and well informed groups. And thereafter they had to face exacting critics, whose standards were Chaplin, Dupont, Dreyer, Eisenstein and René Clair.

This perhaps explains the artistic level of certain films made here at that period, and even a few years later. When these groups were broken up, the chances of continuing to make, or to try to make, intelligent films were diminished. The little that was achieved in that sense was the legacy of the keenness and aesthetic outlook created for the film in this movement of 1929, 1930.

Among such films there are: «LIMITE», by Mario Peixoto (1930); «BARRO HUMANO», directed by Adhemar Gonzaga from the screen play by Paulo Vanderley; «ARGILA», «CIDADE MULHER», «BRAZA DORMIDA», and «SANGUE MINEIRO», by Humberto Mauro; «SONO SOBRE A AREIA» by Mario Peixoto, «BONE-QUINHA DE SEDA» by Oduvaldo Viano, or much later «FAVELA (\*) DE MEUS AMORES», 1936, by Humberto Mauro, outstanding for its splendid plastic composition and photography, and finally, «INCONFIDENCIA MINEIRA» (1947) by Carmen Santos, a historical film which recreates the atmosphere of the revolution of the poets of Minas Gerais, which marked the early stages of the

political emancipation of Brazil. «INCONFIDENCIA MINEIRA», apart from the theme, is a careful work born from enormous enthusiasm. These qualities have resulted in a fairly spectacular film.

Another name to be mentioned is that of Roquette Pinto, leading spirit in the educational film, under whose supervision numerous shorts and instructional documentaries have been made. And again, Adhemar Gonzaga and Paulo Vanderley, who "went in for" the film with their brave review "Cinearte".

There is one film, among all those mentioned, which stands out from all the rest: «LIMITE», written and directed by Mario Peixoto, assisted by the technical skill of the cameraman, Edgar Brasil. «LIMITE», entirely silent, with only two subtitles, barely synchronised. The narrative, based on the German style of scenario, has a marked rhythm, following a cutting technique which is half way between the Russian and the German. It is a film of impressions, without any attempt at analysis or social criticism, which group as an aesthetic unit the expressions, situations and emotions of four people. Mario Peixoto presented «LIMITE» in Great Britain, and on the occasion of these screenings was warmly congratulated by Eric Pommer, Eisenstein and Poudovkin.

After several years during which only from time to time and quite exceptionally one or two films have appeared (in 1936 and 1947) the Brazilian cinema is now endeavouring to establish itself, and producing films whose artistic value is constantly supervised. Much is expected from «ESTRELA DE MANHA», by Jonald, from «ALMAS ADVERSAS» by the novelist Lucio Cardoso, directed by Leo Marten, and from «A VIDA DE NOEL ROSAS», by Gerardo Mourâo. The first two are almost completed, and the last, which is the biography of one of the best-known songwriters in Brazil, is barely started. Then there is «L'ARUANA», by Abdias Nascimento, a story on the life and beliefs of the negroes, now at the cutting stage.

It is a fact that here, as everywhere else, the cinema reflects in the standard of its achievement and expression, the greater or the lesser interest shown by artistic and even intellectual circles capable of influencing the moral standards of production. Such an interest was apparent in Brazil in 1929 and 1930. Thanks to it, good films were made.

Today, judging by public opinion and the interest of the press in films (almost every daily paper in Rio and São Paulo publish a film column) this interest is again alive, and it can be hoped that in the near future there will perhaps appear many Brazilian films with a serious moral and artistic quality, not to mention of course technical improvements, which present a much simpler problem.

José Francisco Coelho

<sup>\*</sup> Needy working quarter of Rio.

## The Venice Film Festival

Festivals do not always receive a good press, even in the newspapers! In this connection it is said that the 7th Art serves as an alibi for commercial deals and that there are certain films which count on receiving a "good send-off" from the attendant publicity. It is said that a festival (the word rhymes with carnival) is a pretext for the exhibitionism of stars of dubious nationality, and even that it can be a kind of tourist visa: finally, that it is a typical manifestation of the restless spirit of the age. All this is true to some extent, varying from festival to festival. Multiplicity has been the main factor in nullifying the value of these events, of which 1947 produced no fewer than four of some importance. Assuming that 10 or 15 awards were made at each, it is not difficult to reckon the number of films that can claim a "festival award". There are prizes which resemble the necklaces offered by the Eastern prince of René Clair's film: when all the world has one, they lose all value.

What good, then, can be said of the 1948 Venice Festival? Firstly, that it was the only big event of its kind of the year. That at Locarno was a very modest affair and the Czech event passed almost unnoticed. Another difference with 1947 was that, with the single exception of Russia, all the chief producer countries took an active interest. In that it can be truly said that the best of the world's production was shown there, the recent Venice Festival can be compared with that of Brussels in 1947. It is not the fault of the festival itself that this best was inferior to what was seen at Brussels, or that the 1948 standard of production was below that of 1947.

#### THE O.C.I.C. AWARD

We all know the definition of this award "for the production that has made the greatest contribution to the moral and spiritual betterment of humanity". It differs from the other awards, which are normally given for artistic merit. Art for art's sake is not the object, but rather art for the sake of man, the whole of man, heart and soul. Pious dullness is not the aim, and here it is in keeping with the spirit of St. Teresa of Avila, who once said to a painter whose good intentions have outstripped his artistic skill: "May God forgive you, sir, for having made me look so ugly!"

The competition for the O.C.I.C. award very quickly resolved itself into a struggle between Zinneman's "THE SEARCH" and John Ford's "THE FUGITIVE". The former excelled in emotional power, the latter in plastic perfection. On the other hand, its very excess of pictorial splendour was a fault of the John Ford - Figueroa production. The drama of the priest as related by Graham Greene lost in profundity what it gained in external splendour. That the cinema can delve into the depth of the soul of man with success is proved by works such as Robert Bresson's "ANGES DU PÉCHÉ" and Billy Wilder's "DOUBLE INDEMNITY". The jury weighed the pros and cons at length, and finally chose "THE FUGITIVE", which was considered a more important film than its rival. The award of a mention to "THE SEARCH" was an indication of the high esteem in which it was held.

To proceed to the films shown at Venice. This review will, perforce, be somewhat cursory, for there can be no question of a detailed analysis of some 50 films within the scope of one article. For the sake of unity we shall review the production of each country in turn, a method which will have the further advantage of a clearer presentation of national characteristics.

#### AMERICAN MEDIOCRITY: TWO EXCEPTIONS

America's artistic crisis, already indicated at earlier festivals, was confirmed. The biggest entry—
11 films — carried off a meagre total of awards. Films like "TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH", "THE BIG CLOCK", "NATIONAL VELVET" and "DUEL IN THE SUN" were all, in varying degrees, banal and conventional. Even "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT", which had a flattering reception, disappointed. This treatise against antisemitism, described as courageous, was in reality a damp squib: in effect, its failure to show the real wrongs of antisemitism did away with the core of the problem. Elia K a z a n's film leaves an impression of generosity it is true, but it is confused and sentimental. "A DOUBLE LIFE" had also been liberally showered with Oscars in its own country, and it is worthy of

note that neither film received an award at Venice. The comparative value of prizes...

"TREASURE OF THE SIERRE MADRE", a straightforward story of gold seekers, pleased thanks to exceptional virility and a peerless performance by Walter H u s t o n, directed by his son, John H u s t o n. This film won a prize for the music of Max S t e i n e r, doubtless to enable it to appear in the list prizewinners.

We have already mentioned "THE FUGITIVE" and it is only necessary to add that it was cited after "HAMLET", and carried off one of the three international awards.

Walt Disney won his usual prize, although "MELODY TIME", a suite of seven sketches of unequal merit, is not up to his best.

Another international prize-winner, "LOUI-SIANA STORY", is in the tonic Flaherty style, but it remains a corroboration rather than a renewal. There is no doubt that "LOUISIANA STORY" and "MACBETH" impressed the critics most. But neither of these films, nor Disney's, is a production of M. P. A. A., the association of the 8 largest Hollywood concerns. It is perhaps no coincidence that quality seems to be the prerogative of outsiders. May it not be a sign that a concentration of interests in the domain of film carries such inherent administrative defects as lack of initiative and originality, the impersonal approach, etc.?

"MACBETH", planned, produced and acted by Orson Welles, may perhaps be seen in retrospect as the festival's biggest event. The main impression left by the film is its atmosphere of tragedy: stark rocks in crepuscular gloom; the rather haggard performance of the author-actor, whose eyes are ever fixed, beyond his interlocutors, upon the forces of destiny; strange cortege of cries and percussive sounds; celtic arms and ornaments. All this, cutting across the ordinary human drama, has the effect of aggrandizing the conflict. And perhaps this is important. Orson Welles breaks violently with realism, even, it might be said, with the material. He has a place for supernatural forces. As an isolated work, "MACBETH" would have no more than the value of an unusual and original production. But one wonders whether, by force of personality, Orson Welles may not manage to open up a fresh aspect of the film as art.

#### FAILURE OF THE FRENCH CINEMA

French production, triumphant last year at Brussels and Venice, could do no better than consolation prizes at the recent festival. "PAYSANS NOIRS" was of bastard stock, a mixture of documentary and crime story. "BATAILLE DE L'EAU LOURDE", story of French efforts to steal heavy water from the Germans, has, it is true, certain qualities, but it cannot claim greatness. "DÉDÉE D'ANVERS" is little

more than a drama of environment, executed with a certain technical verve. The poetic nature of the idea behind Cocteau's "NOCES DE SABLES" gives it a certain value, but it is encumbered by slowness of direction. Finally, "AIGLE A DEUX TETES", also Cocteau's, retains much of the theatrical original.

This meagre French effort should not lead to too damning a conclusion: the grave crisis in the French film industry, cause of the reduction in the number of productions and of the elimination of many of the best projects, should be borne in mind. On the other hand, the vogue for Cocteau, whose "LES PARENTS TERRIBLES" was also shown but did not compete in the festival, cannot be regarded as a healthy sign.

Paul Grimault's animated cartoon "LE PETIT SOLDAT" shared a prize with Disney. Inferior to Disney in animation, he has more feeling.

#### STEADY BRITISH PROGRESS

An impression of security dominates the British offering: quality is maintained in variety, and, contrary to the case of France and the United States, the fact that the most important national producers are all represented is a sign of a healthy economic policy.

The Powell-Pressburger team submitted "THE RED SHOES". This work has a certain originality, for instance the altogether remarkable technicolor ballet, especially composed for the cinema and only possible on the streen, but the wider scope of the earlier works is here narrowed down to the individual drama, hackneyed at that of the artist torn between art and love.

With "OLIVER TWIST" David Lean continues along the road of "GREAT EXPECTATIONS", with a similar fidelity to the Dickensian atmosphere and greater narrative power.

Carol Reed, with a less outstanding work than "ODD MAN OUT", confirms his mastery of narrative and his plastic: the chief value of his "FALLEN IDOL" lies in the originality of the Graham Green e scenario, which won the award for the best screen-play.

Finally, Lawrence Olivier won a well-deserved triumph with "HAMLET" which, by consistent excellence of decor, lighting, camera work, majestic rhythm, perfect acting and perfect direction, earns a place amongst the classics.

To complete, mention must be made of two lesser works: "THE WINSLOW BOY", honest if somewhat garrulous adaptation of a stage play on the theme of a child accused by everyone and cleared by a barrister: and "SPRING IN PARK LANE", a good

comedy in which Anna Neagle and Michel Wilding play the lady and the valet.

#### REALISM OF THE ITALIAN CINEMA

The terms "realist school" and "neo-realism" have been applied to Italian films produced immediately after the war. In reaction against the fascist grandiloquence, the transalpine cineastes have astonished with works as direct as speech. Their subjects were generally social problems, and they literally walked the streets; they used almost no studio sets; real ruins, suburbs, plains and marshes were their background; the heroes were women of the people, priests, mechanics, real people; the very inadequacies of the raw film gave an added veracity to the simplicity of form.

The films selected for the festival are mostly chronicles of our times. Mario Soldati's "FUGA IN FRANCIA" tells of the eventful flight of a collaborator. Castellane's "SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA" has for subject a group of young Romans, and describes their sorrows and joys and their struggles to disentangle their own lives. The award of the Fiprescipric is a little flattering. In "SENZA PIETA", de Lattuada has modified reality to endow with romanticism the unhappy love of a negro and a wronged girl, both angels of purity in a fallen world. Luigi Zampa's "ANNI DIFFICILI" has a kind of mocking pity for a sturdy official turned petty fascist. It is full of a warm humanity, but is not without sadness.

The salutary effect of the shock of realism is bound progressively to lessen. Foreseeing this, some attempt is made to break away from this vein, or else to deepen it. In "AMORE", Roberto Rossellini has fallen victim to the poetry of a story that is new so far as the cinema is concerned but so "special" that it can hardly have a successor. It is the tale of a simple-minded girl who believes herself to be with child by St. Joseph.

Luchino Visconti's "LA TERRA TREMA" describes in realistic vein the wretched state of the Sicilian fishermen and achieves the status of an indictment — The Earth Shall Tremble — but, from the sociological aspect, it is weakened by a deliberate simplification and caricature. Moreover too much preoccupation with form is an excessive check on the action.

#### AMONGST THE MINOR POWERS

The contributions of Germany, Sweden, Argentina and Belgium must be dubbed inadequate. True the Belgian "RUBENS" made by Haesaerts and Storck is a remarkable piece of work, but it really belongs to documentary. The Mexican "MACLOVIA", by Fernandez and Figueroa, is some-

thing in the nature of a repetition of "MARIA CAN-DELARIA", and has many of the same qualities.

"THE SEARCH", a Swiss contribution produced with American cooperation, has already been mentioned.

Amongst other Polish productions was "ULICA GRANICZNA", whose theme is anti-semitism, a more sincere work than the other films dealing with this subject. "OSTATNI ETAP", about readjustment to life in a women's concentration camp, is a finer work, however, owing to the effectiveness of the sober objectivity with which the authors, Wanda Jakubowska and Gerda Schneider, both former inmates of Auschwitz, present their dramatic subject.

The co-operation of that master of film, G. W. Pabst, has been of immense benefit to Austria. His "DER PROZESS", a piece of pleading against antisemitism, uses to the full all the cinema's visual resources, and won for its author the award for direction.

#### CONCLUSION

This would doubtless be the place for a dissertation on the trend of the contemporary cinema, but any attempt at such a thing would be specious and somewhat dishonest. For, granting that the production seen at the festival was the best of the past 12 months, it cannot really be called representative of the modern cinema. Many great directors were not represented: such representative names as Wyler, Chaplin, Wellman, Wilder and Hitchcock were absent from the American list: René Clair, Bresson, Claude Autant-Lara, Delannoy and Becker did not figure amongst the French: and De Sica and De Santis were missing from the Italians.

If, curbing such a desire, an attempt is made to analyse merely the general picture presented at the Lido, the conclusion that no particular tendency emerges clearly is rapidly reached.

At the very most we can make the following points: comedy was very scantily represented; crime was at a low ebb in comparison with previous festivals; anti-semitism was the most recurrent theme; adaptations from stage-plays or well-known novels were few (in spite of "HAMLET" and "MACBETH"); the majority of films seek their inspiration in contemporary events.

In addition, the production of each country can be summed up as follows: American mediocrity and lack of originality; French obliteration; comforting British standard; experimental vein of a still maturing Italian cinema; finally, a few isolated successes from the lesser countries.

From a quantitatively important event, such results are meagre enough. To sum up, the Venice Festival of 1948 can justly be designated — average.

### FILM PANORAMA

BY OUR PERMANENT EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENTS

#### ARGENTINA

This year Argentina has produced a series of films of unequal value, in which the note of quality has not, unhappily, predominated, in

spite of several praiseworthy efforts.

The best piece of the season was "PELOTA DE TRAPO", a film from the new production group, S. I. F. A., which for the first time on our screens treats the subject of foot-ball, a sport to which the Argentine public is passionately devoted, in a realistic manner. Produced on a modest budget, but with a sufficiently authentic background, it has a human quality which has induced several critics to compare it with postwar Italian films such as "VIVERE IN PACE" ("To live in Peace") and "QUATRO PASSI TRA LE NUVOLE" ("Four steps in the clouds"). This exaggeration can be attributed to the scepticism which greeted any suggestion that the Argentine cinema could achieve simplicity in film production.

Our young industry has strained after effect in recent productions, trying out original cameraangles and strange lighting effects. Unfortunately this research, not in itself to be condemned, was used on poor subjects, so that the only result was the exploiting of technical effects for the benefit of ridiculous stories. Argentina Sono Film's "PASAPORTE A RIO" was an example of the work of a troubled young director, Daniel Tinayre, whose "A SANGRE FRIA", an excellent piece of work, although slight of theme, drew the attention of the critics last year. The influence of a certain section of the French cinema can be traced in the sombre gloom of Tinayre's work, although it lacks a similar emotional power. Nevertheless the film has merits and contains some extremely good acting by Mirta Legrand, a young Argentine star hitherto rather

underestimated.

The success of the season was "DIOS SE LO PAGUE". The work of Louis Cesar A m a dori, who has been named, the man of great successes", is pleasant to watch and many of its weaknesses are redeemed by a constructive ending. There is too much dialogue, but it is helped by excellent filmic rhythm. The film is entertaining and has great possibilities commercially. The leading parts are played by Arturo de Cordova especially engaged for this role, and the beautiful and talented Zully Moreno.

Other films presented during the season do not come up to the same standard, and there have been some rather bad failures, such as "LA SECTA DEL TREBOL", from the San Miguel Studios, and "EL TAMBOR DE TA-CUARI", which fails in the attempt to make a star of the adolescent Juan Carlos Barbieri.

BELGIUM

Jaime Potenze

Our national production is outstanding neither in quality nor in quantity. To date 1948 has seen the completion of only one feature film, «PASSEURS D'OR», and this has not yet been exhibited in Belgium. Our achievement in the field of documentary is more solid. Besides an acceptable film about Abyssinia by the Frères Fichonnier, and a better than average short, Charles Dekeukeleire's «AU PAYS DE TYL UYLENSPIEGEL», we can acclaim the excellence of «RUBENS», by P. Haesaerts and H. Storck, a feature length documentary which was enthusiastically received at Venice where it carried off the gold medal for the best film on art and the CIDALC prize. «RUBENS», made to an entirely new formula, is the most successful example so far of the analysis of a painter's whole work. It is a real monography in film. The deeply moving sequence devoted to Rubens' Life of Christ is especially worthy of remark.

Belgium sees more American films than any other European country. Approximately 80% of the films shown on our screens are American. Needless to say, quantity is not, unfortunately, matched with quality. Films shown during the summer and in the early winter have been particularly poor.

Nevertheless, a few stand out from the undistinguished mass. «KISS OF DEATH», «RIDE THE PINK HORSE», and «TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE», for example, prove that though the American cinema is no longer supreme, it can still produce distinguished work.

Unfortunately the general public neglect such films for works that could well be dispensed with. If the public likes «THE BISHOP'S WIFE», or «LIFE WITH FATHER», well and good. But it is sad that the «CARMENS» and the «CASBAHS» the Betty Grables and the Yvonne de Carlos

should prove such a strong attraction. It is true that the American invasion is supported by a publicity campaign as skilful as it is knowledgeable. Journalists who have to move heaven and earth to procure a photograph of a European star are inundated weekly with communiqués, photographs, "biographies" of every kind.

In this connection, Belgium is, I believe, the only European country — Great-Britain excepted — which has yet seen the famous «IRON COURTAIN» (Shown in England, July, 1948). Various communist counter-demonstrations in Brussels, Anvers and Liège gave the film a certain amount of publicity without which it would doubtless have passed unnoticed.

Mention must also be made of the great success enjoyed by, the re-issue of Lewis Milestone's masterpiece, «ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT».

The remaining 20% is divided, in order of imporance, between France, Great Britain and Italy. The French (technically speaking those distributors who show mainly French films are referred to) showed their main productions early in the season. Thus «L'AIGLE A DEUX TETES», «LA CHARTREUSE DE PARME» and «D'HOMME A HOMMES» were seen in succession. Other releases are announced, but it is difficult to find out about them. The French publicity machine is inferior to the American. During the summer season «PARIS 1900» and «DERNIÈRES VACANCES» won high regard.

British production is notable for quality, but the British film has not yet won general popularity. «HAMLET», recently shown, had an enthusiastic reception, but «IT ALWAYS RAINS ON SUNDAY» and «THE FALLEN IDOL» (Lost Illusion) found favour with a small elite only.

Several very interesting Italian films are heralded. So far we have only seen «COMÉ PERSI LA GUERRA», which has been very well received.

The German sound film has made a timid, tentative reappearance on the market. «HOFRAT GEIGER» met with an explosive reception. «DIE MORDER SIND UNTER UNS», shown in a specialist hall in Brussels, released a press campaign of a quite disproportionate violence. Sporadic provincial reappearances are made by other films, produced during the war, such as «DIE FLEDERMAUS» (completed after the defeat), «IMMENSEE», «DIE GOLDENE STADT». The general public does not cold shoulder them, but a small and very active group feels that it is too soon to hear German spoken on the screen and does everything possible to prevent it.

Leo Lunders

The cinema and football matches are the principal diversions of the mass of the Chilean people. Except in rural districts, where films alone make sporadic appearances, projection apparatus being brought along for the occasion, they are available all over the country.

On the advent of the sound film, North American production dominated the market. During the last ten years Mexican and Argentine films have won great popularity, but their technical standard is appreciably lower, notwithstanding real progress recently made by the Argentine cinema.

European films of high artistic merit, such as the British «THE SEVENTH VEIL», the French «LA SYMPHONIE PASTORALE» and the Italian «ROMA CITTA APERTA» and «VIVERE IN PACE», began to make their way into Chile after the second world war. The great success they enjoyed established a preference for good European productions amongst cultured audiences.

The Chilean cinema is in its infancy. Photography and sound production are good, but there are no real film actors. Slow rhythm, as of a photographed stage-play, and weakness of subject make the feature films of little interest. This is true in spite of a happy use of the countryside, of national folklore and of scenes of country life. Latterly, production seems to be veering rather towards comedy and the short film. There have been several first class shorts recently, and the series "Chilean Events" are interesting and well made.

The attitude of cinema audiences is interesting. On the one hand are the masses who go to any kind of film out of habit, with no discrimination as to aesthetic or moral value: on the other are groups, increasingly numerous, who choose their films and make their opinions felt.

In recent years the great success of such films as «THE SEVENTH VEIL», «THE SONG OF BER-NADETTE», «LA VITA RICOMMINCIA», «BAMBI», show a marked tendency in favour of films with a more profound ideological content and high artistic merit.

Without any doubt the great successes of 1948 have been Walt Disney's «SONG OF THE SOUTH» and the Italian «ROMA CITTA APERTA» and «LA VITA RICOMMINCIA»: this latter, in particular, filled the theatre for four months, with three performances a day, and established a record for Santiago da Chile.

V. Manuel Rivas del Canto

#### DENMARK

The position of Denmark in the world of film today is very unsatisfactory. The Danes seem to have no liking for serious films and as a result, the cinemas have for a long time been drawing smaller audiences. It looks as if the studios will either have to stop work or content themselves with making nothing but farces and light comedies.

The best films presented last autumn were, "NAKED CITY", "MONSIEUR VERDOUX", "BOOMERANG", "CROSSFIRE", "THE SEARCH", "QUAI DES ORFEVRES", "ODD MAN OUT", "CLUNY BROWN", "CARNEGIE HALL", "HAMLET". Yet none of these films attracted large audiences.

The Danish Cinemathetic has opened its season with "THE BLUE ANGEL", "THE CLOWN" (by Sandbergh, 1926, with Gösta Ekman and Feraudy) and "INTOLE-RANCE". The Danish Film Society has had to close down.

The only critical film review in Denmark, "Film 48", is now singing its swan song.

One is not exaggerating therefore when one says that the Danish cinema is in unhappy condition.

Björn Rasmussen.

#### FRANCE

We know that, in France the great directors insist on being the authors of their films: the choice of scenario is theirs, they do their own adaptations and their own casting, and control the film from start to finish. Producers hesitate to risk their money on these lofty projects, which may be remarkable pieces of work but may or may not achieve popular success. They prefer unambitious works which can be entrusted to less exacting directors: these are safer propositions. Doubtless this is the cause of the dearth of productions from the great directors.

Delannoy, author of "LA SYMPHONIE PASTORALE", seems to be an exception, for he has just presented "AUX YEUX DU SOUVE-NIR", in which, with pleasure, we renew our acquaintance with Michèle Morgan, perhaps the greatest French film actress, now rarely seen on our screens. It is known that she was to have played Joan of Arc in a Delannoy film, but the American production, with Ingrid Bergman, as Joan, caused the abandonment of this project. "AUX YEUX DU SOUVENIR" aims much less high than "LA SYMPHONIE PASTORALE" or the projected Joan of Arc: there are even reser-

vations to be made in the moral sphere. Nevertheless, Michèle Morgan creates a most moving character in a love story which has as background the world of civil aviation. The film has all Dellannoy's technical mastery, and all his at times rather frigid perfection of direction. The moving scenes in the aircraft in difficulties can hold their own with the best of their kind.

Christian-Jaque has boldly launched forth on an adaptation of Stendhal's very beautiful novel "LA CHARTREUSE DE PARME". The result is a remarkable film from many aspects, but the grandeur of the model has caused it to be judged by very high standards. This year he completed "D'HOMME A HOMMES" an international film with U. N. O. patronage, about the life of Henri Dunant, Swiss founder of the Red Cross. An extremely moving film of high inspiration, it does not overcome biographical difficulties with complete success, but the war scenes give proof of the high quality of its director.

There must be a special place for Maurice Cloche, Catholic producer, who for a long time has had to content himself with undistiguished films, and who has now been able to carry out a long prepared project (which is at the same time his masterpiece) in "MONSIEUR VINCENT". He has decided to persevere along the same road, and has just made himself a producer in order to direct "Dr. LAENNEC", and in so doing prove that the public wants noble works that exalt the greatness of man. "Dr. LAENNEC" is not a religious film, although Laënnec is presented as a fervent christian. It is the story of the French doctor who spent his life fighting against his old enemy, tuberculosis, and who, at the beginning of last century, invented auscultation, vital weapon against the disease. It is a sombre film, for Laënnec sees all who are dear to him carried off by the dread disease of which he himself will die at the end of the film, but it teaches a noble lesson of courage and selflessness. Here, even more perhaps, than in "MON-SIEUR VINCENT" Maurice Cloche proves himself a great director.

Until now the adaptation of stage plays for the screen has been regarded as a last resort. The most striking characteristic of recent production is certainly the return of the theatre to the screen. Jean Cocteau, writer and poet, is its chief exponent. His interest in the cinema dates a long way back, for he was responsible for one of the best known short surrealist works, "LE SANGD'UN POETE". Since his fairy story of 1945, "LA BELLE ET LA BETE", Cocteau has become a director. He has adapted Victor Hugo's melodramatic "RUY BLAS" for the screen, not without a measure of mockery and an exaggeration of its romantic character, as well as two of his

GREAT BRITAIN

own plays, "L'AIGLE A DEUX TETES" and "LES PARENTS TERRIBLES". The first of these is in romantic style not so very far removed from that of "RUY BLAS", and this limits its appeal. The second is of much greater interest. Paradoxically, Jean Cocteau has chosen to film the play without adaptation; in this meeting of stage and screen the cinema has the predominating role. The same actors appeared in the stage play hundreds of times, and the camera never leaves the little room where the action takes place. Nevertheless the film is very cinematographic thanks to the artistry of the set and expressive precision of direction. Not a word of the text has been modified, and, like the play, the film is a rather disheartening picture of decadence in a middle class, bohemian family, and of mother love excessive to the point of jealousy.

We must give the pioneers their due. Marcel P a g n o l was for a long time alone in preaching the filmed stage-play, and his trilogy, "MARIUS", "CESAR" and "FANNY", represented the earliest successes in this vein. His recent entry into the Académie Française marks a stage in the reconciliation of the cinema and the old literary school. This year he has been enthusiastic over the invention of two French engineers in the field of colour, and has made, in Roux-color, "LA BELLE MEUNIERE", an attempt to reinstate Tino Rossi, singer of charm who has only appeared to date in execrable but highly popular films. Unfortunately Roux-color, although full of promise for the future, is not yet perfected, and Pagnolhas not repeated with Tino Rossi as Schubert the success that marked his rediscovery of the comedian, Fernandel, some time ago.

Good comic films are rather rare in French production. No ël-No ël, who as actor created the comic character of Adémaï, has recently completed, as director this time, "LA PARADE DU TEMPS PERDU", or "LES CASSE-PIEDS", a very good comedy, often reminiscent of Molière. No ël-No ël remembres his time as a Montmartre song writer, and gives, in Review form, a series of sketches about present day frustrations, often extremely funny.

Religious films have a good place amongst projected works: there is much talk of an adaptation of Bernanos' "CURE DE CAMPAGNE", by Bresson, maker of "LES ANGES DU PÉCHÉ", from whom, perhaps, amongst French directors, most is expected in the field of the psychological film. Elsewhere, the success of "MONSIEUR VINCENT" founds a new school, and Blistène is finishing "LE SORCIER DU CIEL", in which the Curé of Ars is one of the principal characters.

7. L. Tallenay

As a result of the stress and strain of war, various factors combined to put British films in the forefront of cinema programmes. Better stories, intelligent production, vital acting and the sense that films were a major contribution towards the war effort, all helped to raise the standard of the native product.

The impetus thus gained was maintained for a long while after the war ended. Films like "THE WAY AHEAD", "THE CAPTIVE HEART", "THEIRS WAS THE GLORY", "ODD MAN OUT", etc., raised the prestige of British films immensely.

During the last 18 months, however, there has been a feeling of depression among the critics in England. We have witnessed a decline to mediocrity, all the more distressing because it seems to be needless. Experiments with film star "discoveries", squabbles over dollar expenditure and the policy of mixing British and American teams and stories have brought us down again to the level of the Californian film factory.

Nevertheless, a series of films offered to us during the current year give renewed hope that the genius for producing films of value and significance has not departed from these islands. Artistically it is clear that we have the material; it remains for a wise and judicious economic approach to the problems to give a steady output of worthwhile films.

A year cannot be called a sterile one which shows us films of the calibre of "IT ALWAYS RAINS ON SUNDAY", "HAMLET", "OLIVER TWIST", "AN IDEAL HUSBAND", "WINSLOW BOY", "FALLEN IDOL", "THE RED SHOES", "QUARTET", "MINE OWN EXECUTIONER", "THE GUINEA PIG", "LONDON BELONGS TO ME" and "ANNA KARENINA". One high class film for each month of the year is not a bad effort. There have, of course, been films about which it is kinder to be silent but which one has the right to denounce as monstruosities. "IDOL OF PARIS" and "THE CALENDER" are two that have harmed our reputation for sanity and democracy.

After "HAMLET", the most filmicly significant picture is certainly "THE RED SHOES". Significant for its implications of vast fields as yet unexplored in the regions of sight and sound. Music is one of the cinderellas of the screen. Here we have the fairy prince coming with a pair of ballet shoes to cast a spell on art director and actors alike. The colour

and decor of "RED SHOES" is superb. The imaginative loveliness and ability of Moira Shearer are not the least of the films assets. It is rarely that one finds an actress who is also an accomplished ballerina. It is all the more surprising, therefore, to have to say that the ending of the film is both inartistic and unnecessary. The gory suicide is a vulgar technicolour mistake which we thought "DUEL IN THE SUN" would have made it impossible to repeat.

Four of our first-rank directors have provided us with an interesting comparison in methods of child exploitation. Carol Reed, David Lean, Anthony Asquith and the Boulting Brothers have each given us a film dealing with some aspect or other of the problems of childhood and youth.

In particular, Reed and Lean, each with a special talent for poetic work, has handled a child actor with conspicuous success but with quite different results. "THE FALLEN IDOL", tells of a child's lost illusions when the man whom he heroworships, proves to have feet of clay. Graham Green's short story has been beautifully transferred to the screen and Carol Reed has given us the most sensitive piece of child direction yet to be seen on the screen. Little Bobby Henry's performance equals that of Robert Lynen in "POIL DE CAROTTE" with this difference, that Robert Lynen had a talent for acting which the English boy could not be expected to have. On the other hand, the English director deserves the credit for the natural way in which the camera has captured the actions and expressions of a rather serious little boy without letting the child descend to mere mimicry.

David L e a n has achieved in "OLIVER TWIST" a Box-Office as well as an artistic success. Perhaps it is fair to say the artistic qualities of the film would have been greater had the director sacrificed the fair curly hair and refined accents of little John Howard D a v i e s. Since Oliver Twist was brought up in the workhouse in company with a gang of little hooligans, it is straining poetic license rather far to present him as a little aristocrat among a group af sans culottes. Another weakness is the opening sequence, very effective from a film point of view but strongly suggesting the opening sequence of "GREAT EXPECTATIONS".

Of course, Carol Reed had the easier task. Graham Greene presented him with a compact story, whereas Dickens is notoriously diffuse and demands the pruning shears before being turned into a film. Carol Reed too, was blessed in finding just the right type of boy, naturally bilingual, also

naturally accustomed to grown-up company. This made the task of the director very much simpler, though it is clear that he gave a great deal of time and thought to the character of the film child.

Anthony As quith, in "THE WINSLOW BOY", offers us a film and a theme which I dare to call typically British. The story eventually stimulated British public opinion about 35 years ago. A young naval cadet was dismissed without trial or the possibility of appeal, on a charge of stealing 5/-. His father took the matter himself in health and financially, he won the right to let his son stand trial and be aquitted of the charge.

This film brings out the best in British film technique. The acting of Robert and Cedric is superb, the sets are satisfying without being overpowering. The direction of this film, which is adapted from a stage play, shows the artistic hand of A s q u i t h at its most poetical, and provides a strong contrast with another film, adapted from a play "THE BLIND GODDESS", which, though it has a strong story and Eric P or t-m a n to act in it, is a failure as a film.

Talking of adaptation from stage plays, "THE GUINEA PIG", produced and directed by the Boulting Brothers, is an outstanding success. It had a long and successful run in the West End of London but there is nothing in the film to suggest its origin. Like "THE WINSLOW BOY", it contains shots and ideas that could only be conveyed through the medium of film. The theme is topical: the reactions of a lower-class boy in a Public School. Though the film contains nothing that is really new in this formula, it is played and directed with such a nice sense of restraint, that one is led to treat it more seriously than it deserves. Ricard Attenborough is convincing as the boy, though his true age peeps out now and again trough his boy's eyes.

A film that has proved to be a great disappointment and also something of a challenge to the critics is "BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE". This K o r d a film, coming after "IDEAL HUSBAND", "FALLEN IDOL" and "WINSLOW BOY", shows that the great Sir Alexander is capable of flops as well as any other great producer. It also shows, rather surprisingly, that he resents being told so by the critics. The film received not a single good notice in the English Press. As a result, the streets of London were placaded with a protest against the critics in which Sir Alex appealed to the loyalty of the British public. It seems odd that, because the public liked "FALLEN IDOL" and "WINSLOW BOY" which were good

# Venezia / ix mostra internazionale d'arte cinematografica



The power of the persecuted priesthood

OCIC AWARD

FUGITIVE (U. S. A.)

Prod. R. K. O.-Argosy Films

Director:

John Ford

Stars:

Henry Fonda Dolores Del Rio Pedro Armendariz

### OUR PRIZE WINNERS

A Drama about the "Displaced Persons" in Germany



SPECIAL MENTION

DIE GEZEICH-NETEN

ANGES MARQUÉS THE SEARCH (Swiss)

Director:
Fred Zinneman

Prod. Praesens-Film-M. G. M.

"The film most capable of contributing to the moral and spiritual betterment of mankind"

# FILMS

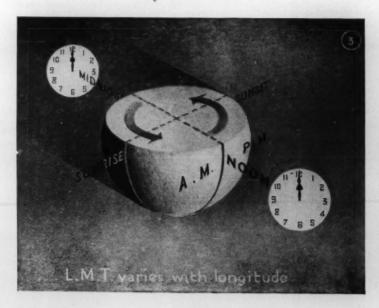
"BUSH CHRISTMAS"



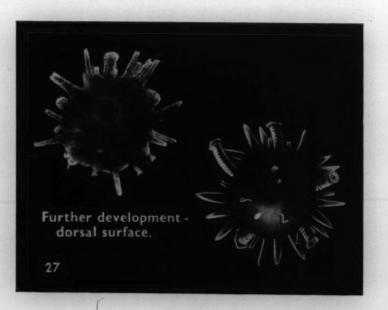
to amuse ...

... and instruct

"DAY AND NIGHT"



G.B. Instructional



"THE SEA URCHIN"

THE CHILDREN

films, they should also like "BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE" which is not! It has beautiful scenery and a wonderful story, but the scenery cannot make up for the false atmosphere of much of the other studio sets, and the story is so ill-used that it might as well have been a piece of fiction instead of the most romantic tale in British history. David N i v e n looks uncomfortable as the Prince, and though Margaret Leighton is beautiful and acts well, she is not able to redress the balance as Flora MacDonald.

"QUARTET", composed of a group of short stories by Somerset Maugham, suggests a new outlet for the film omnibus. It has more unity than the usual collection of short films, though, in fact, each story is different and has its own director. The link is provided by the author himself who appears and chats about his life and work. From a Catholic point of view, there is much to be desired in the pagan, materialistic, philosophy which informs the work of Somerset Maugham, but the films are admirably produced and directed and there is some first-class acting from comparatively little known players. Jack Watling is a young man with talent as well as good looks. George Cole, another young actor in the same film, submits a careful study of suburban frustration. Dirk Bogarde, after a poor start in "ESTHER WATERS", shows that he has character and ability. Cecil Parker, Hermione Baddeley, Mervyn Johns and Françoise Rosay are experienced players who add to their laurels in this glossy film.

A welcome break in the dark cloud of heavy drama that hat overlaid the screen of late is seen in "WOMAN HATER" and "IT'S HARD TO BE GOOD". The first has Stewart Granger trying, not very successfully, to be funny opposite that great and beautiful French actress, Edwige Feuillère, and the latter has a new comedy team that may well give us some happy moments in the future. Jimmy Hanley and Anne Crawford in a satyrical piece about the efforts of a humanitarian to spread the gospel of good-will, do all that the script-writer-director, Jeffrey Dell, wanted them to do. It may not be a very popular film for the general public, but it is a welcome relief to the unrestrained gloom of many recent British films.

"ESTHER WATERS", with Kathleen R y a n and Dirk B o g a r d e, is a miserable translation of George Moore's miserable but well-written Victorian novel. "LONDON BELONGS TO ME" is a gloomy saga of London's lower classes under the strain of economic pressure and ethical chaos. It has capable performances by Richard Attenborough and Fay Compton. It attempts to do for the South of the

Thames what "IT ALWAYS RAINS ON SUNDAY" did for the East End.

All things considered, inspite of the weak and uninspired work we have had to sit through during the last half year, there is more than one film which justifies the critic's eternal hope for the future.

John A .- V. Burke

#### HOLLAND

Although the Dutch enjoy a high reputation for documentary, they have never produced feature films of any importance. Holland had two film studios before 1940, one at The Hague, the other at Duivendrecht near Amsterdam, but their production did not reach international standard.

The studio at The Hague was completely destroyed by bombs during the war. In September, 1944, the Germans looted the Duivendrecht Cinetone-Studios, leaving only the bare walls.

The "Nederlandsche Bioscoop Bond", an association of all Dutch cinema owners, raised more than a million guilders in donations from members, to finance the restoration of the studios, which were officially re-opened on August 25th this year.

Since then the film "NIET TEVERGEEFS", directed by the Frenchman, Edmund G r é v i l l e, has been made; an English version with the title "BUT NOT IN VAIN" will be shown in Great Britain and the U. S. A. The film is nearly completed, and at Christmas it will have premieres in the three largest Dutch cities, Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam.

A second Dutch film, "EEN KONINKRIJK VOOR EEN HUIS", directed by Jaap S p e y e r, who made a couple of films before the war, is now in production.

Although in the post-war era Holland has yet no film production in the proper sense of the word, two films, part fiction, part documentary, are worthy of notice and augur well for the artistic standard of future production. Both are produced by *Polygoon-Profilti*, who make excellent news-reels, with scripts by A. Koolhaas.

The first is "MOEDER DES LANDS", exhibited on the occasion of Queen Wilhelmina's golden jubilee; it shows what this great Dutch queen has meant to her people during the past 50 years.

The second, "THUIS", was especially produced for the benefit of the demobilised Dutch soldier coming home from Indonesia. It is only shown on board returning troopships and in demobilisation camps. Giving an excellent impression of developments in Dutch life during the soldiers' absence, it is eminently suitable for exhibition abroad.

In conclusion, the reception given by the Dutch people to the French "MONSIEUR VINCENT" must be mentioned. This master-piece was hailed in the Catholic press as the first really Catholic film of outstanding artistic and technical merit ever to be shown.

A gala-night, under the auspices of the French ambassador, marked its premiere at The Hague.

The Dutch press, including such non-Catholic papers as "Het Vrije Volk", a labour organ, were unanimous in praise. One of the critics concluded his review as follows: "What kind of film is this? The moved silence of a heterogeneous audience bears witness to its calibre. A good and ennobling work. French film-art could have done the world no greater service in this selfish age".

The distributors are "Nederland", one of the most important Dutch distributors. The film is a great success not only in the Catholic South but also in the North, where Catholics are in a minority, and it is fully booked for the next six months.

J. Fortuin.

INDIA

Father E. G a les S. J. a missionary from Luxembourg, writes to us from Calcutta: "In September a special screening of "MONSIEUR VINCENT" was given at St. Xavier's Hall in the presence of Dr. K a t j u, the Governor of Bengal. He was so impressed by the life and example of the Saint that he asked the Rector's permission to have the film shown to the various Ministers at the Governmental Palace".

We have received from Rev. Father F. Morlion, O. P., member of the official Jury at the Venice, Biennale", the first review of the much expected film «FABIOLA».

The "Universalia" organisation and the director Blasetti have been good enough to let me have a private view of the working copy of "FABIOLA" on the very day the first editing was completed. It is very proper that the INTER-NATIONAL FILM REVIEW, organ of the International Catholic Cinema Office, should have pride of place in offering its world-wide readers the first appreciations of a work so much looked forward to. For "FABIOLA" is the first great film of the first great Catholic organisation, set up in the very centre of Christianity, having at its command technical resources and a programme of production in no way inferior to those of the most important commercial organisations. The sane realism, which was one of the outstanding characteristics of the late Canon Brohée, founder of the OCIC, has already recognised that Christians could only enter the world of film by conforming strictly to the laws of film making and by avoiding the establishment of Catholic societies concerned solely with clerical or piously moral films. "Universalia" is interested in films which have nothing applicable policieus in films which have nothing explicitly religious about them and which are naturally the subject of much debate — Visconti's "LA TERRA TREMA" for example — yet it was strictly from point of view of its objective artistic merits that we on the Jury of the late Venice Festival accorded it an international prize "for its stylistic and choral worth". But "FABIOLA" is the prototype film, the first of the line, the film which, after two years hard work and at a cost of 550 million lire, is the answer to the question whether Catholics are capable of something better in the domain of the cinema than little amateur efforts and rather pitiful pieces of sanctimoniousness.

"FABIOLA" is a beautiful name, the title of Cardinal Wiseman's justly famed novel, having nothing of the cinema about it. Blasetti, with the help of half a dozen of the best Italian scenario writers, has aimed to create a new kind of production for which he himself takes the whole responsibility. The film "FABIOLA" is not the story of the daughter of the rich Fabius, but is above all the story of Christianity, youthful and unsullied, rising from amongst the people in the midst of the last phase of a wornout and corrupt paganism. The pregnant idea which emerges forcefully, after three and a half hours of film, is this: "Christianity is nothing other

than the peaceful victory of the brotherhood of man rediscovered in Christ, divinely superior to the passions, to the hatred, the egoism, and the despair, of decadent Roman paganism (as of the paganism of today)." It is in the light of this central theme that we must judge of the artistic merits of a production which, while being perhaps too diffuse, is the herald of a new Christian dialectic in the art of the film.

1. The movement of the film is social rather than individual. A still potent empire is in the hands of sceptics who handle the ignorant masses by the political demagogy of the scape-goat (the Christian, source of all evils), just as racism and classpolitics are used in our own day. Slowly the action takes shape in a crescendo out of a multiplicity of episodes: the Christian is everywhere, the Christian is the people, the Christian is strong with an interior power, the unarmed Christian puts fear into his persecutors. And the movement grows right up to the splendid final climax — the martyrdom of the centurion Sebastian. From his stake he subdues his executioners by the simple word of the Gospel. The young Christian, Rhual, too, who has refound the Faith and on three occasions refuses to slay the gladiators he has overcome in the arena.

The whole historic mystery of Christianity is there: The Faith triumphs by the blood of the Christians who refuse to sacrifice to false gods or to kill at another's bidding; the Faith which finds the joy of life in victory over death, forerunner of the eternity of the Father in Heaven.

2. The spiritual movement of the film is more implicit than explicit. The conversion of Fabiola, of her slave Sira, the reconversion of Rhual, the changes of soul in the pagans moved by what happens (Quadratus, Fabius), the reactions of the pagans who are hardened in their errors; there is indication of all these spiritual movements but they are not laboured. The technique of the film, wholly visual and tending to simplification, touches only the threshold of the human soul; poetry and sometimes romance succeed in penetrating it more intimately; but no art-form is capable of plumbing the depths of the soul whose secrets are known to God alone. Blasetti might have sounded the depths more deeply, but he has preferred not to profane the mystery in the way that Cecil De Mille and his imitators did in "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS", "THE SIGN OF THE CROSS", "THE CRUSADES"

3. The realistic approach succeeds very delicately in bringing out spiritual values from the circumstances of everyday life. The English talk of "understatement"

in politics and of "underplaying" in dramatic art. Blasetti has surpassed the Anglo-saxons in requiring from his players an extreme restraint by the avoidance of every gesture that could appear bombastic, of all speech that could appear rhetorical. Fabiola (Michèle Morgan) lies dying almost motionless in her torment of doubt, and only her eyes reveal the springing of Grace in her soul. We are given no more than an echo of the drama of Fabius (Michel Simon), of Galba (Carlo Ninchi) and of Fulvio (Louis Salou). Rhual himself (Henri Vidal), Sebastian (Massimo Girotti) and Sira (Elisa Ceg a n i) suggest rather than dramatise their change of soul. The only roles that appeal directly to the emotions are those of Quadrato (Gino Cervi) and Lucilla (Silvana Jachino), who are representative of ordinary folk, simple and spontane-

Space forbids us to probe more deeply. In conclusion, here is a film which does not prove a thesis (as a theological treatise would), which attempts no analysis of all the workings of the soul (as a novel or poem might do), but recognises the limitations of the Christian film. Here is a film wherein the Christian idea, ostensibly hidden in the movement of people at large and in the secret depths of souls, emerges slowly but with power.

F. Morlion, O. P.

#### LUXEMBOURG

During the last few months the taste of Luxembourg cinema audiences has undergone a rather curious change.

If, after the liberation, memories of trillingualism and its not always happy consequences were vivid; if people, spontaneously and freely, were seized with a desire to renounce the German language; if resentment, occasionally mingled with a scarcely veiled hatred, was the source of a violent and sometimes brutal reaction against the oppressors' tongue; if, moreover, the mass importation of American films was in accordance with the sincere wish of a liberated people, to-day, that is to say barely three years after the cessation of hostilities, a perceptible change, of gradual but sure development, is taking place amongst the general public. The number of films from across the Atlantic diminishes rapidly: France tends to regain her pre-war place, in this sphere at least, and Austrian and German films no longer meet with hostility.

This fact seems to furnish indirect proof that our projection halls must make their main appeal to the public who do not understand all the nuances of French and English dialogue, but who are, on the other hand, perfectly capable of understanding every shade of meaning in German.

Of 60 films shown during the last three months, exactly one quarter were of German or Austrian origin; a dozen came from France, and America, Great Britain and Italy provided the remainder.

Amongst these sixty films, works of any merit were rare indeed. Only «JERICHO» (French), «MAN-POWER» (American), «LA CHARTREUSE DE PARME» (French), «NINOTCHKA» (American), «BERLIN EXPRESS» (American), «LE PÈRE TRANQUILLE» (French), «THE IRON CURTAIN» (American), «ANNA KARENINA» (British), «VIVERE IN PACE» (Italian) were well received. The fact that cinema directors take as their main consideration the general preference for events rather than essays in psychology or sentiment, is, as a general rule, the reason for mediocrity being the order of the day.

All the same, proof that the good film can be used to educate the public, as much in the moral as in the aesthetic sphere, is found in the resounding success of such works as «THE SONG OF BERNADETTE», «GOING MY WAY», and, above all, «MONSIEUR VINCENT».

Criticism, moreover, is becoming increasingly preoccupied with the intellectual aspect of the problems posed by the cinema and its rightful place in the cultural sphere is gradually being conceded.

Except for amateur efforts our national production is non-existent, but honourable mention must be made of the feature length documentary, «POUR LA LIBERTE», produced by our most active cineaste, Philippe Schneider, and recently shown to members of the *United Nations Organisation* at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris. This same M. Schneider plans to make several semi-documentary, semi-fiction films during the coming year.

Pierre Grégoire

#### PORTUGAL

Portugal's film production, notwithstanding certain recent progress, remains very limited: about half a dozen films per year. This would already be something to be proud of if a uniformly high moral and technical standard were reached.

In recent months our screens have shown Perdigao Queiroga's «O FADO», a production of some merit. Perdigao Queiroga, a technician of skill with an excellent training received abroad, has claims to be considered a great director. «O FADO» is a musical, starring Amalia Rodrigues, who is considered the best interpreter of the fado, a sentimental song unjustly labelled "national".

Armando de Miranda, responsible for two films last year, the musical «CAPAS NEGRAS», again with Amalia Rodrigues in the leading role, and the long documentary on folklore, «AQUI, PORTUGAL!», gives us a rustic drama, «SERRA BRAVA». Its action is set in Suajo, a northern district where contraband is practised on a large scale at the expense of Spain. Altough it confirms Armando de Miranda's technical skill, this film will not add to his reputation.

A new name has appeared amongst Portuguese producers this year, and this is Carlos Profirio, who has made two films, «UM GRITO NA NOITE» and «SONHO DE AMOR». Neither is outstanding, but, although they cannot compete with the rest of Portuguese production, they serve as a useful vehicle for the launching of an artist of promise, Maria Eduarda Gonzalo.

Leitao de Barros, the best known Portuguese producer, who made, amongst other films, «INES DE CASTRO» and «CAMOENS», is now at work on «VENDAVAL MARAVILHOSO», story of the amours of the Brazilian poet, Castro Alves. The entire costs of this film are being met by Brazil, although the cast includes artists from both countries. Here again Amalia Rodrigues plays the feminine lead.

There are other films in production in Portuguese studios, but we shall not write about them until they are publicly exhibited.

Foreign production continues to dominate the Portuguese market, the majority of films being from North America, Britain, France and Italy. Thanks to the success enjoyed by «VIVERE IN PACE», «SCAMPOLO», «ROMA CITTA APERTA» and others, Italian films have won a high place in public esteem.

The American films which have been the most popular and have had the longest runs were «THE YEARLING», «THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES», and, very recently, «THE LABYRINTHINE WAYS» (The Fugitive).

Great Britain, which from time to time has sent productions that can rival those from the United States, is represented by «ANNA KARENINA».

R

A

The French «LA SYMPHONIE PASTORALE» did not run for long, in spite of publicity from certain quarters. Its first showing co-incided with the premiere of «MONSIEUR VINCENT», which was made a Gala evening, attended by representatives of the President of the Republic, of His Eminence Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon, and of the Papal Nuncio, as well as by members of the Portuguese Government, the Diplomatic Corps and many other important people. The high moral and technical value of «MONSIEUR VINCENT» called forth enthusiastic praise from the critics, and thousands flocked to see the film. Special praise was given to the famous actor, Pierre Fresnay. «MONSIEUR VINCENT» can be said to have conquered Lisbon audiences. Part of its success is due to publicity given by the Catholic press and by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. But, quite apart from publicity, the film's innate qualities make it the best French production yet seen in Portugal.

V. Leal

#### SWITZERLAND

There was a marked improvement in the European films shown in Switzerland during the winter 1947—1948, not only in quantity but also in quality. It was during this period that the eagerly awaited Swiss film "DIE GEZEICH-NETEN" ("THE SEARCH" "ANGES MAR-QUÉS") was shown. The actors in this piece are Czech and American and the scene is first laid amid the ruins of a German town, then switches to an U.N.R.R.A. camp. As a result 90% of the dialogue is English. The director is Fred Zinnemann, an American citizen of Austrian extraction; in fact the only Swiss contributions to the film are the capital invested in it, the photography (Emil Berna), the script (Richard Schweitzer) and the general outline of the story. The film, which is concerned with the physical and mental sufferings of the children of war-torn Europe, received almost unanimously favourable press reviews. Only a few critics pointed out that the documentary element encroached upon the main subject with damaging results to the balance of the whole. The informed critic will also notice several passages devoid of originality, which give the impression of having been seen before.

Numerous American films have been shown, of which the most outstanding was "THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES", by William Wyler. This is a courageous piece of work showing how three G. I's from the American fighting forces had

to adapt themselves once more to civilian life. "FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS" (Sam Wood, based on Hemingway's novel) was only moderately successful, while Charles Chaplin's "MONSIEUR VERDOUX" was generally considered a somewhat macabre form of entertainment. The happy ending of Billy Wilder's "THE LOST WEEK-END" is regrettable as it does not suit a film of such emotional power.

Amongst English films, which always receive a warm welcome, the following were especially appreciated by Swiss audiences: "GREAT EXPECTATIONS", "ODD MAN OUT", "THE OVERLANDERS" and "THE SEVENTH VEIL". This last reconciled us to films with psychoanalysis as their main subject, often so badly done.

We have had several first class French films. Amongst others were Duvivier's "PA-NIQUE", Henri Decoin's "NON COUPABLE", Carné's "LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS" and Christian-Jacque's: "UN REVENANT". It is a pity that these should all be tinged with existentialism, an outlook which we cannot share. Cocteau's masterpiece "LA BELLE ET LA BÊTE" is most satisfying to the spectator; while Rene Clair's "LE SILENCE EST D'OR" exercises a strange fascination, certain frivolous touches notwithstanding, and has gained universal approval here. Finally "MONSIEUR VINCENT" is undoubtedly one of the most outstanding events in the cinema world, both as regards excellence of production and deep significance of subject. Unfortunately, in the German speaking areas it did not have the success it deserved.

Three good Italian films "IL SOLE SORGE ANCORA" by Vergano, "PAISA (Rossellini) and "VIVERE IN PACE" (Luigi Zampa) should also be mentioned.

As happens every year, the summer of 1948 was a "closed season". Films which were brought into the country by the thirty-eight agencies located in Switzerland after successes elsewhere, dit not appear in any of our 350 cinemas until the autumn. The Swiss public were especially glad to see works which had been successful in different competitions, or those which had been long looked forward to. The outstanding success of "HAMLET" and "OLIVER TWIST" is notable.

Amongst American films "SITTING PRETTY" (a charming comedy quite without depth) and "FOREVER AMBER" were particularly popular, the latter in spite of its mediocrity and dubious morality, on account of the best-seller which had preceded it.

A

If English-speaking films have to be high quality to draw the crowds, the Swiss public is much less particular about films in its own lanlanguage. French films — even the poor ones — have always a chance of winning approval in French Switzerland, and German or Austrian works can fill the cinemas in the German part of the country.

On the other hand some new films met with less success. "DER PROZESS" (Pabst) which was highly praised at this year's Venice festival, only ran for five or six days in a Zürich cinema. (Pabst's battle is with a type of anti-semitism utterly foreign to us). "THE FUGITIVE" awarded the O. C. I. C. Prize at Venice, did not make the impression that might have been expected (in spite of excellent reviews in a press representative of all shades of opinion and notwithstanding the artistic merits of Ford's film). A similar lack of enthusiasm greeted "DIE MERDER SIND UNTER UNS" ("THE MURDERERS ARE AMONGST US"), an extremely well made German film dealing with a very topical subject.

Our own studios have produced nothing outstanding since "THE SEARCH". This is the more regrettable in view of the high esteem accorded to Swiss films not only at home but also in the international market.

Dr. Charles Reinert.

#### URUGUAY

#### Native Film Production

A Special Commission was, by decree from the Ministry of Industry, set up on May 7th 1948, with the object of studying the possibilities of inaugurating a national film industry. The Commission has sent a confidential report to the Government.

For several years a group of private persons have been interested in the possibilities of film production. Our studios have brought forth some uncommon films, which may be regarded as more or less successful essays.

The question of films is one of general interest and is frequently the subject of newspaper articles. The journal «La Mañana», has published statistics which show that whereas, in 1940, 7,121,820 persons visited the cinemas in the capital, by 1947, the figure had doubled, increasing to 14,181,734, which, considering the population, gives a proportion of 14 visits per person per year. During the last three years the number of spectators has increased by 2,000,000 a year. The same rising rhythm is noticeable in the rest of the Republic: 1,632,709 in 1945; 1,885,765 in 1946; 2,210,434 in 1947. The popula-

tion of the provinces and of the capital each average about 1,000,000 inhabitants. The income of the cinemas in Uruguay in 1947 was approximately 12,000,000 pesos (6,000,000 dollars) that is to say, about 3 dollars per head of the population.

At the present moment, owing to the erection of a number of new cinemas, the figures, especially in the capital, should be very much higher.

The same publication refers to recent legislation in England and France favouring the native industries and it demands that similar laws be enacted in Uruguay. It also suggests that we examine the possibilities, not only of expansion in our country but even of exportation of our films to other countries in Latin America.

The question has great importance in the eyes of one who has followed it at close quarters and it is probable that we shall shortly be in a position to give more positive news about this matter.

#### The Montevideo Premiere of «Monsieur Vincent»

Maurice Cloche's magnificent film was presented to the public of Montevideo at the Metro Cinema at a performance patronised by the Academy of Religious Sciences before a large and select audience.

The favourable reviews given to this film by foreign critics were completely confirmed by our own public and by independent criticism.

Before this Premiere, the Archbishop of Montevideo, His Excellency Mgr. Antonio María Barbieri, having seen the film privately, wrote an article for the press in which he said, "the teaching offered by this film illustrates the authentic conception of Christian Charity in that it is incarnated by an exceptional personage, in contrast to the abuse and indifference offered by his environment; this imparts to it an impression of actuality which reminds one of the problems harassing contemporary society". Mgr. Barbieri expressed the opinion that the film reached a very high degree of technical and moral perfection and recommended it for "its constructive example of how to better the cinema and its power in presenting truth".

The daily paper, "El Bien Público", in a long account of the premiere, observed that it is rarely that one sees united in one film a conception of the subject that is at once of great educative value, and at the same time, of great beauty and sober and moving in its effect. Tributes were paid equally to the director and the chief actor of the film.

"El País" writes that «MONSIEUR VINCENT» "is a good exemple of what the Cinema can do when it has an authenic subject of great human significance, a group of first-class actors, and a cultured attitude towards the technical means at its disposal."

Ruben Oreiro Vazquez

#### THE FILM

### IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

Increasingly, the motion picture is being put to work in the school rooms of the United States. There are few schools in the urban regions of the United States where the use of films is not well known and accepted. With almost no exception, where films are not being used, the citizens of the communities and the school authorities are endeavoring to make films available.

Number of Projectors in the United States

This ist not to say that films are being used as extensively as they might be, or that they are making their maximum contribution to education. Many schools that use films and are enthusiastic about their use depend upon a single projector to service as many as ten school buildings with some 200 school rooms. If you consider that this country had approximately 500 16 mm sound motion picture projectors in 1936 and now has something over 50,000 in the schools, the 100-fold increase in the past twelve years is startling. On the other hand, if you consider that there are over 27,000,000 students in over 900,000 school rooms in the United States, it can be noted that the 50,000 projectors mark only a good start towards the present goal of the field, of a projector in every classroom.

Growth of Films in the Schools

The most significant trend in the United States during the past ten years has been the growth of popular acceptance of the use of films as an educational tool. All too often in the past, the public were apathetic or regarded the use of motion pictures in education as a "fad" or as a "stunt". To a large degree this popular acceptance of the motion picture, as a desirable or necessary instrument of instruction, is due to extensive use made of training films during World War II. Over 6,000 motion pictures and filmstrips were produced by the United States Government to assist in the specialized training of the armed forces and of civilian workers in war industries. A total of more than 25 million adults, therefore, experienced the use of training films in their own wartime training. These adults are largely responsible for the general belief. that films in education are not only desirable but necessary if their children are to have a modern education for living in the world.

Characteristics of Education in the United States

These use of films in the schools of the United States reflects the basic characteristics of education in this country, which differs considerably from similar developments in other countries. To better understand the use of films in the schools of the United States, it may prove desirable to note some of these differences in development.

The first characteristic of our education is the great decentralization of control over the administration of schools. There exists no national authority that can exercise any control over the use of films. Schools are directly under the control of over 111,000 local boards of education. These local boards of education consist of citizens of the community in which the school exists. They usually decide the expenditure of funds, and exercise great control over the materials used in the school classes. The extent to which films are used, to which funds are made available for the purchase of equipment and films, and even the titles of the films purchased rests almost entirely in the local community.

This local control of education makes for intense local interest in the community schools. In terms of visual education, this is reflected in the growth of the field. No national figures are available, but it is estimated that approximately one-third of all the projectors in the schools were bought by local parent organizations and given to the school. The history of film use in the schools of the United States can be told largely in terms of the interest of parents and their financial support beyond that allowed by school budgets.

Character of the Kind of Films Used in the Schools

Important for this discussion is the character of the films that have been developed for schools. First, there is a sharp distinction between the use of the film medium as a tool of instruction, and the appreciation of the motion picture as an Art form. Secondly, the schools insist that films be developed as an integral part of the curriculum. Thirdly, films are usually

47

considered a part of the total of "visual education" and are seldom considered alone.

The educators of this country consider that the study of the films as an Art form with the educational objective of developing an intelligent film appreciation is quite distinct from the use of the film medium as a tool of instruction. Film appreciation is taught, therefore, along with language appreciation and is usually an integral part of the language appreciation classes on the highschool level. The development of these classes and their courses of study has constituted one of the accomplishments of the National Council of English Teachers, and of the Motion Picture Council. The various professional and business organizations of the motion picture industry have cooperated fully and intelligently in the development of thesc courses, and it may be noted that these courses are given throughout the United States. This is one of the reasons why the cinema club movement has never gained much headway in the United States.

#### Films as an Instrument of Instruction

The use of films as an instrument of instruction is considered quite apart from the study of films as an Art form and is known generally as "visual education". Visual education may by defined as the intelligent use of pictorial forms of communication and includes the use of maps, sand tables, charts, posters, still pictures, slides, filmstrips, and sound and silent motion pictures. Indeed, the educator who stresses the use of motion pictures only is considered to lack a well-balanced view. In this connection it is also interesting to note that while there are some 50,000 16 mm sound motion picture projectors in the schools there are over 200,000 35 mm silent filmstrip projectors. Considerable stress, therefore, is laid on the use of the correct form of pictorial presentation in terms of the unique characteristics of each form.

#### Pictorial Presentations as a New Language

The more advanced view is that the various forms of pictorial presentation taken as a whole constitute a new language. This picture language is considered to be potentially as complete as the verbal language in the content it can present successfully. The picture language is perceptual while verbal language must almost always be on the conceptual level. This raises at once the question as to the educational content that can be presented more effectively by pictures and that which can be presented more effectively by words. Research is just beginning on this point.

As a direct result of these viewpoints, most educators have insisted films be produced that integrate completely with the local curriculum. This has lead to the production of the "instructional" film as opposed to the "documentary" film.

The educators tend to reject the generalized,

The educators tend to reject the generalized, emotionalized approach of the documentary type of film. They are in favor of the sharply focused film, the instructional film as we know it here, which uses the rational presentation of the content developed for a rather specific grade level and in terms of the content that is an integral part of the curriculum.

The instructional film, developed in the United States, differs in many respects from the documentary film. One difference is the placement of the instructional film as but one form of pictorial presentation. This is not to say the documentary film has no place in education. Indeed it is welcomed and widely used on the adult level and constitutes an important contribution to the development of the refinement of film forms. Documentary films in the United States are used primarily for auditorium programs.

#### Showing the Instructional Film in the Classroom

The first educational films that were used in this country were ones that were used largely in the high schools and in the school auditorium. This derives from the fact that the first projections were made in 35 mm and date back to the period of about 1920. At that time, the only films available were in the 35 mm nitrate size which required fireproof booths for 35 mm projectors. Many of the schools in the larger school systems purchased these projectors which were installed in the school auditorium.

There also existed at that time considerable belief that films and films per se were of value in education. It became quite customary then to assemble all the students of the school in the auditorium and to show them educational films.

It is now believed, however, that the educational film is most effective when it is shown in the class-room as a part of the presentation of a given area of subject matter in a given unit of study and with a given class. The constant endeavor of the people who work in the field of visual education has been to secure this type of classroom showing.

This should not be interpreted to mean that all auditorium showings of films are undesirable. As a matter of fact there is a place for auditorium showings on such general subjects as school safety, and perhaps for such general occasions as national holidays, and the like. However, there is a general understanding that such film showings are not as educationally effective in the same way as showings that are part of a classroom lesson.

In the main, therefore, it can be said that the use of films in the schools of the United States range from auditorium showings which still persist, to class-room showings which are more popular.

#### Sound vs. Silent Motion Pictures

In this discussion mention has been made of the 16 mm sound film and little mention has been made of the silent motion picture. It is likely that there has been too much tendency toward the use of the 16 mm sound film as opposed to the silent motion picture. Owing to the widespread attendance at the

theatrical motion picture of our school-age students, there was originally a belief that the silent film was automatically an old-fashion, out-of-date type of film and therefore hardly worthy of attention. Many producers then exclusively went into the production of the sound motion picture.

This tendency has become more moderate, since there is a definite place in the schools for the silent motion picture, particularly in the lower grades and in the science and civics classes of the higher grades. More and more, schools are taking the sound motion picture and running it silenty, with the sound system of the projecter turned off. Usually when this is done, the film is also run with the sound turned on at least once during the coverage of the lesson. A discussion of this will come later in this article.

#### Training the Teacher in the Use of Films

One of the serious problems has been to train the teachers in the proper utilization of films. The tradition of the theatrical showing, in which a person sits passively while the picture is being shown, is still a major tradition in the showing of all films. Both teachers and students unconsciously tend to follow such tradition. Another problem is that some teachers may show a motion picture just "to fill in" a class period.

The emphasis, therefore, of teacher-training institutes, courses, conferences workshops, and other meetings of teachers in the field of visual education has been on a five-point program.

- 1. Selecting the film in terms of a given unit of subject matter.
- 2. Previewing the film and preparing the lesson which includes the film.
- 3. Preparing the class for the showing of the film.
- 4. Showing the film.
- 5. Examining the class for the knowledge derived from the film, and the reactions to the film.

While this continues to be major emphasis of teachers' programs, there is an increasing tendency to develop refinements of the above procedure. Such refinements generally take two different forms. a) For example, some types of motion pictures serving specifically the emotionalized objectives do not require, and indeed are more effective, when the routine (in the five-points above) is not followed too rigidly. In some cases of highly emotionalized films, it is better to hold practically no questioning at all at the end of the class period but to postpone that until the following day. With other films, a preparation of the class for the showing will vary with the type of film and the nature of objectives to be served. b) The second refinement is the emphasis on the personal ingenuity and skill of the individual instructor. For example, in the elementary grades, some films are run silently and then run silently a second time, as the students tell their own story through a microphone hooked up to the loud speaker system of the motion picture projector. The teachers also show a portion of the motion picture and allow the students to develop an oral language lesson based on just that part of the total film. In the higher grades, this variation in use and personal adaptation is manifested in classes in which the same motion picture may be shown as many as five times — once perhaps to acquaint the student with the over-all process shown in the film; the second, to acquire a working vocabulary of the technical content of the film; the third, to emphasize the sequence of procedures of the safety practices that everyone needs to study; the fourth, to have a discussion of some of the finer points; and the final showing, to best the students.

During the war, when physical-skill films were used (to train a person in the use of the lathe, for example) it was found quite advantageous to have the student go directly from seeing the film to an attempted performance of the task. The student was often sent back to review the practices and procedures in the film so that he may correct his errors.

Any discussion here of the individual practices and the examples of individual initiative in the use of films is quite inadequate, since these practices vary in terms of the grade levels, in terms of subject matter, and in terms of the objectives to be served. These examples, however, should be sufficient to stress the fact that in most of our teacher-training institues, the emphasis is on the ingenuity of the teacher in the use of these materials in terms of his teaching methods and of his class. So little is known about the over-all, long-range impact or film use that every teacher, to a certain extent, needs to undertake the informal type of experimentation indicated here and so learn the best practices and procedures.

The final impression that should be gained regarding the use of films in the United States is that there are thousands of teachers and hundreds of specialized directors of visual education who are constantly experimenting with different types of film treatment, with different objectives, and with different classes on various grade levels. Discussions of the varying techniques of film use are one of the most truitful phases of the teacher-education conferences that are being held throughout the United States as part of the regular meeting of State Teachers' Associations.

#### Conclusion

Detailed generalizations can not be made at the present time. However, we are hopeful for the progress being made in the field of visual education. Thousands of teachers are working toward achieving a better and more effective use of this new and powerful medium of communication to the end that objectives of education may be advanced and that all the people may have a better education.

# An Experiment in Teaching

BY FILM

Instructional Films are still very little known in schools.

It is a curious fact that while the producers had in mind a clientèle consisting of schools and made every effort to acquaint themselves with teaching programmes and methods it is almost entirely among adults and further education organizations that instructional films have been systematically used. The war contributed largely to this state of affairs. Several arms prepared films for the instruction of the troops notably the Air Forces in America and in Great Britain. This effort paralleled that of industry which makes successful use of technological films for the training of apprentices and even of its craftsmen, and that of institutes of scientific research which have recourse to the camera to perpetuate things which the eye only sees fleetingly under the microscope or through the x-ray screen. Scientific documentaries made for this purpose obtained a speedy and outstanding success in which astonishment and admiration were combined when shown to the public at large. They are at present used in advanced instruction especially in the medical faculties and for the study of the experimental sciences. Could this success of the instructional film, in a field and with a public for which it was not at first envisaged, be a sign that it is less useful for study programmes in teaching primary and secondary students and is less efficacious with children and adolescents?

There are many who think so, but do not dare to say it. Among the most ardent supporters of films in schools, those who can make conclusive experiments are rare. It is not to be wondered at. Instructional films prepared in the form of a definite educational programme are still very few; their adaptation to the age of the pupil has rarely been foreseen. Therefore, although interesting attempts are made to set up an instructional film method it cannot be said that these instructional techniques of presentation have proved themselves to the point of being generally adopted. Each author attemps to find a presentation of his films which makes them suitable for teaching; it is uncertain whether it would be to the taste of the teacher who will have to use them in his class.

It would seem, therefore, that prudence is still necessary. At present it is equally premature

either to praise or to condemn the systematic use of the instructional film in schools. Let us wait till it has been tried experimentally on a large scale. Which, moreover, is indispensable if its methodology is to be established beyond much argument, which can only happen with the collaboration of the film-makers and the teaching body.

These remarks must be borne in mind before drawing any conclusions from the experiments which will now be described. They can only have a relative value.

a relative valu

An Experiment.

During November 1948 the Centre d'Etudes Pédagogiques (1) organized an instructional film show to invite the teaching body to carry out an observed experiment relating to children of the same age and the same class.

In order that objective conclusions could be reached, it was necessary to ensure both with masters and pupils that identical conditions of instruction and control should be obtained. With this in view the following procedure was adopted.

A preliminary session divided into groups the teachers of different schools who wished to take part in the experiment. Ten instructional films were shown to them. They had been chosen because they were capable of illustrating one section of the official educational programme in French secondary schools.

They were screened beginning with those films intended for the lowest class.(2).

After the showing of the films designed for a particular class the teachers present (there were about 200) were invited to give their opinion:

(1) On the adaptation of the film to the programme of their class.

(2) On the teaching value of the film and therefore on its possible use for their pupils.

After discussion four films were set aside by

It was decided that they should be presented to the pupils during the following week. Conditions of their showing were rigidly laid down and each teacher agreed to respect them.

#### Conditions:

(1) The teachers were left free either to give a lesson on the subject before the showing of

the film but without announcing the latter. Or, not to explain the subject until after the showing of the film or even not to talk about it at all, relying on the film alone to give the pupils the first idea of this part of their curriculum. It was understood that each teacher should indicate the method which he had adopted.

(2) The teachers were asked to divide their class in two equal groups and to form the two groups by placing in the first the pupils who at the last general examination obtained the places one, three, five, seven, etc. and in the second the pupils

who had places two, four, six, eight, and so on.

(3) Teachers were asked to take each of the groups thus formed to a different film. Finally they were asked to examine the pupils when they had seen the film, four days later, in writing, without the children having been warned at any time that they might hear of the film again.

The questions were decided by the Centre d'Etudes Pédagogiques, and sent to each teacher in the interval which separated the showing of the film and the examination.(4)

The Results.

A total of 396 pupils belonging to nineteen different classes took part in the experiment. Correction of the written tests was made by the same person with the following results:

Film «HOW ANIMALS WALK». Average

obtained by pupils who saw the film: 6,1.

Average obtained by pupils who did not see the film: 4,3.

Film «ROOTS» Average obtained by pupils who saw the film: 6,1.

Average obtained by pupils who did not see the

Film «LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE». Average obtained by pupils who saw the film: 5,4. Average obtained by pupils who did not see the

Film «PETROLEUM». Average obtained

by pupils who saw the film: 8,35.

Average obtained by pupils who did not see the

If the results are considered by classes it is first of all noticeable that it is the older pupils who have obtained most profit from the films. Thus «LA-TITUDE AND LONGITUDE» which was unanimously voted a model of film instruction by the teaching body, was understood and retained by all pupils in the second class without exception (averages for this class 8 and 9,1). While the pupils in the sixth class, much younger, obtained averages from 4 to 4,8. The same observation holds good for the film on petroleum: pupils of the second and fourth classes obtained excellent averages and all the pupils understood and retained the essential points. A difference of one

year in age and the greater maturity which is to be expected in the passage from one class to another is sufficient to modify the results to a remarkable degree. Thus, pupils of the seventh class who saw the film on roots obtain averages of from 4 to 5, those of the sixth class averages of from 6 to 7,2, those of the fifth, averages of 8,4.

It may perhaps, be necessary to take into account the fact that older pupils express themselves more easily, especially in writing, and that the younger ones were placed at a disadvantage by the method controlling the experiment. They might perhaps have shown more easily orally what they had really understood and retained.

A second statement seems to be indicated: the film does not seem to make easier the understanding of abstract lessons and the conception of general ideas. Or rather, good pupils assimilate these ideas equally well by means of books or talks. More than one who had not seen the film on latitude and longitude gave an excellent explanation going immediately to the essentials. Similarly, the young pupils of the sixth class showed that without a film but after description, sketches and experiments in the class-room they had grasped perfectly the phases in the development of a root and the influence exercised upon it by moisture and the presencee in the soil of metals such as

On the other hand, it may be remarked that pupils who have understood abstract ideas perfectly make mistakes in applying them. They sometimes manage to announce results or to imagine consequences which are in open contradiction of experience. This practically never happens when the child has seen a film. The child who writes "Nothing can affect the movement of a root" evidently belongs to the group which did not see the film. This may arise from the fact that concrete details presented visually and throughout their development have struck the imagination and have been retained. Thus, the youngest children who have seen the film «HOW ANIMALS WALK» do not miss saying, that the gibbons use their long arms as a balance to preserve their equili-brium. Almost all say, that the seal cuts the water ,,like a torpedo" and that on land it helps itself along with its tail by passing it beneath its body and then pressing down upon it. Similarly, all of them have seized on the fact that a root moves aside from a piece of copper placed in its path but that if its tip is cut off it is incapable of this action and dies from contact with the metal.

However, reading the exercises as a whole brings us to believe that these results must be attributed less to the fact that the child has been able to see in detail a concrete example and thus inscribes it in the memory, than to the acquisition of a wholeness of knowledge, of a familiarity, of a certain feeling for a subject which preserved him from contradictory and ridiculous statements. If this theory is confirmed, important conclusions can be drawn from it for the compostion and use of educational films.

Some conclusions.

First of all, the educational film should seek to present subjects which cannot be studied in their entirety or continuously either in a course of lessons or in a book or even with the aid of reference notes. Thus, the growth of a root, the embryology of a frog, a historical or geographical unity, the reconstruction of a romantic or classic atmosphere. But it must be understood that what is demanded of a film will be above all to supply what direct observation or even scientific experiment cannot give (micro-photography, slow-motion or, on the

contrary, speeded action, etc.).

The advantages of films thus conceived seems to us indisputable. So far from getting away from reality they give an idea of wholeness; they do not separate the precise object to be studied but replace it in its context. Nevertheless in order to avoid the very real danger of dispersion as well as that of inaccuracy it seems desirable to interpolate diagrams and simple but concentrated sub-titles which can interrupt the commentary and serve, as it were, as a hinge to assist the mind in making the transition from the particular to the general, from the concrete to the abstract. For if this work is not made attractive during the showing of the film and by the film itself, it is to be feared that there will be no real intellectual profit.

As for the best use of the film in teaching, it seems certain that it requires a commentary by the teacher and that this commentary will gain by being made between two showings of the film. If this is impossible, it seems preferable to show the film after a preliminary talk in class and to take up the talk

again after the film.(5)

In the same train of thought, although the indisputable step forward of the sound film is a matter for satisfaction it would be regrettable to neglect commentaries, sub-titles and superimposed text. Explanations on the sound track or by the teacher during the showing of the film can reduce the number of sub-titles sufficiently for the visual impressions produced by those which do appear on the screen to be very strong. Auditive and visual memory must support each other. We have recourse to the first for everything concerned with presentations of unity and explanatory commentaries; we make use of the latter to emphasize a salient fact, to point a new phenomenon, to direct the attention to a law or to a verbal expression which is to be remembered.(6)

Pierre Faure, S. J.

(2) Here is the list:

Sixth Class "ROOTS".

"HOW ANIMALS WALK".

"LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE".

Fifth Class "ANTS"

"PETROLEUM: ITS ORIGIN AND PRODUCTS"

Second Class "PETROLEUM: ITS ORIGIN AND PRODUCTS"

First Class "SHAKESPEARE" (two films).

Philosophy Class ,,THE TELEPHONE: ITS PRIN-CIPLE AND APPLICATION". "ATOMIC PHYSICS" (first. and

second parts).

(3) "HOW ANIMALS WALK" (Sixth and seventh classes). "ROOTS" (sixth class); "LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE". (Sixth and second classes); "PETRO-LEUM" (Fourth and second classes).

(4) Questions Asked.

- (a) HOW ANIMALS WALK.
  - (1) Have you observed the cat's way of walking? Give examples of animals which walk in the same way.

(2) How does a kanguroo walk?

Give an example to show how the form of an animal's foot is adapted to its method of walking. Complementary questions for children who saw the film.

(4) How does the seal move?

Why was the film stopped in two places?

Why do the gibbons move their arms while walking?

(b) ROOTS.

(1) How does a root grow? Does it always grow in the same direction?

What can affect the movement of a root?

Has a root absorbent hairs from the beginning? For what purpose are they used?

(c) LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE.

(1) How can the position of a ship be found out, using an atlas or a map? Give an exeample supposing a ship to have left Dakar for Rio de Janerio and to have made exactly half the crossing. Where is it? How do you express this?

(2) Find the capital city which is (a) at two degress east longitude (b) at forty nine degrees north latitude? Explain by means of a diagram, representing the globe, how you have found this city.

(d) PETROLEUM.

- (1) How can the means by which petroleum was originally formed be explained?
- In what parts of the world are petroleum deposits found?
- Of what are petroleum deposits composed?

How is petroleum extracted?

(You may use diagrams in each question).

(5) In confirmation of this we cite the results in a school where various geographical instructional films were shown:

A simple Oral Lesson, averages: 5,83 out of ten. Lesson by film alone: 4,64.

Oral lesson preceding film: 6,55. Film preceding oral lesson: 6,96.

Film accompanied by oral lesson: 7,35.

(6) It is curious to note that a third of the pupils of the second class who saw the film on petroleum, four days later wrote notes in English and without a mistake on the diagram of the petrolem deposit. The film which was of English origin had been translated into French but the superimposed text had remained in English.

<sup>(1) 5,</sup> rue de Madrid, Paris 8e.

Claude MACKE

Enquiries Bureau for the Children Problems, Editor to the "Educateurs", Paris.

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A CAPITAL PROBLEM

The last word, it seems, has been said about the manifold aspects of a problem which to us appears paramount: that of Children and the Cinema. Investigation shows that cinema-goers under twenty years of age are the most faithful to and absorbed by the films. Parents realise this fact and are disturbed by it though apparently resigned to it. School teachers declare that after a night at the cinema, children show signs of deterioration. Educationalists are disquieted because of the prestige, the formidable power of the screen. Magistrates regard it with suspicion and some of them are inclined to lay upon it all the weight of child delinquency.

Research, evidence, expressions of concern, sermons and inquisitons: for the past twenty years the dossiers have been growing. International opinion has seized upon it these many times since the labours of the League of Nations and of the International Institute of Rome.

Without any doubt, Filmology will provoke new investigations from the psychiatric point of view. Children's reactions to the cinematographic image will become the subject of analysis.

Research, therefore, has been active for a long time. What we want to know is whether it has arrived at any useful conclusion.

At this point it is necessary to distinguish between two aspects of the cinema. In the first place it is clear that the cinema is an educational instrument of the greatest importance; that is what is meant when people refer to the teaching film, or instructional films. A recent international congress dealt with the points of view, achievements and present problems of those concerned with this aspect of the cinema. CIDALC (Comité International pour la Diffusion des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences par le Cinéma) summoned in Paris during last October, an International Congress of persons interested in Instructional and Teaching Films.

On the other hand, it is equally clear (indeed, this is its most widespread function), the cinema is an instrument of recreation, a means of distraction.

It is this last aspect of the cinema, as it occupies the leisure time of the child, that will concern us most in the section of this Revue devoted to children and the cinema. Obviously, these two aspects of the cinema have a common frontier and can only really be distinguished according to the intrinsic qualities of the film being viewed. There can be no doubt but that uncontrolled participation by children in the performances at ordinary commercial cinemas is fraught with considerable danger.

Various steps to prevent this have been taken.

There have been prohibitions pure and simple: children forbidden to enter cinema under a certain age, differing in different countries. There have been films from which children under a certain age have been exculded. These protective measures, whether or not they have been successful, have certainly been justified.

They offer, however, but an imperfect solution: age limits of whatever kind, granted they satisfy legal requirements, cannot be expected to take count of personal evolution in the child; they cannot bring it about that, having passed the legal barrier of age, the child finds himself miraculously capable of assimilating adult films.

A preliminary conclusion, therefore, suggests itself: it is that the problems connected with "Children's Cinemas" are themselves part of a greater problem, that of the cultural advancement of the screen. Is it sufficient to let the cinema (outside the use of films for educational purposes) remain always as a kind of forbidden fruit, exercising by that very fact, a strong attraction? Is it enough to condemn such and such a film, leaving it to be supposed that the majority of the others have no objectionable aspect?

It is evident that the problem must be attacked at a broader level and these stop-gap solutions abandoned in favour of creating an environment favourable to the formation of a cinema conceived especially for children, suited to their dimensions and taking account of their psychology. At the same time it will be useful to consider the intrinsic character of film-presentation and with these ideas in mind to form "Ciné-clubs" specially for children.

to form "Ciné-clubs" specially for children.

The realisation of this programme involves many obstacles, not the least of which is the financial one, nor, at the outset, is it possible to think of reducing it. The production of films especially for children is still in its early stages. It is not necessary to refuse support to films which, though they do not conform fully to the desired formula, are nevertheless, such that at least in theme and presentation, not unsuitable for child audiences.

It is clear that the only satisfactory solution must be by the exchange of films and by co-production on the international plane. Several recent international gatherings, particularly that of CIDALC, have resolutely devoted themselves to the realisation of this idea. Only by such a cooperative effort can the cinema be delivered from its dreary history of degrading servitude and find rehabilitation and dignity. In the service of children will the cinema find its true greatness and become "an effectual instrument for the education and elevation of mankind".

Remo BRANCA

Editor of the "Rivista del Passo Ridotto", General Secretary of the International Confederation for Sub-Standard Film, Rome.

### THE FUTURE OF SUB-STANDARD FILM

To accept the Cinema in its present form is not of itself enough: new tendencies must be studied and understood. At the present moment two new means of progress are open: television and the sub-standard film. Of these two, the sub-standard film poses the more urgent problem and is of greater interest to the Catholic Church from the point of view of upholding "the moral and religious life of the entire Christian people." (Vigilanti Cura)

What are the main features of this new cinema which, besides its vast power to corrupt, opens up in compensation huge possibilities of apostolate?

Its characteristics are both technical and economic.

Take the technical aspect first. Hitherto the taking of numerous precautions has been essential to projection on account of the inflammable nature of film, and the complexity of the apparatus used has called for the skill of a professional operator.

Sub-standard film has the following distinctive qualities. It is non-inflammable, which means that safety regulations can be done away with: it is also portable, since it can be moved without difficulty, at a moment's notice, like any wireless set. A sound film can be shown wherever an ordinary electric light current and a white wall are available, even if there is none but a child to work the apparatus.

The consequence of this technical development is that now the cinema can come to the home whereas before people have had to go to the cinema. And so the 16 mm film has penetrated homes, schools and factories and has made considerable progress in the country, where it was hitherto unknown. The 16 mm film leaves nothing to be desired in the matter of clarity and luminosity of image and quality of sound, especially in halls seating fewer than 1,000 people. We ourselves have assisted at projections from a distance of 30 metres on to a screen 4.50 metres in size, for 2,500 people. This result can actually be achieved with a 16 mm projector mounted on a cinema-van. Henceforward missionaries will be using this kind of cinema as a means of penetration all over the world.

For the benefit of those who — mainly through ignorance, are doubtful about the technical qualities of sub-standard film, we shall describe the economic features which are leading certain business men

to believe that the whole future of the Cinema (with the exception of television) lies in the substandard film. The installation of sub-standard apparatus costs one fifth of the price of any standard installation. A two hours standard programme weighs 40 kilogrammes: in 16 mm the weight is only 10 kgs. This 75% reduction in weight, together with its non-inflammable nature, enables the 16 mm film to be sent by Air, so that it arrives months ahead of the heavy, inflammable reels. The copies for distribution (a minimum of 500) represent a further economy of about 15,000 kgs. of film, and there is also the reduction in despatch costs.

Finally, the scattered audiences in places where there is no large hall can have the same show at one quarter of the cost. This economic fact, made possible by technical progress, will ensure the final triumph all over the world of the new non-inflammable film. At least 30% of the inhabitants of the world, who are at present ignorant of the Cinema, will thus be brought into contact with it.

One can foresee that, by virtue of economic and technical, and therefore necessary and practical laws, in three years time at the outside every isolated and far-flung spot throughout the world will be reached by the cinema. Commercial interests are already at work to bring this new development to perfection.

These technical and economic aspects, briefly discussed above, offer to Catholics everywhere a real opportunity to play an important part in the Cinema's future through the organization of a huge network of small halls (oratories, scholastic institutions, parishes, convents, open-air cinemas, etc.)

Hitherto big halls were usually beyond the means of small organizations, owing to the high cost of construction of the professional projection box, which had to conform to all the safety precautions required. But sub-standard is, so to speak, a "pocket" apparatus. Priest, missionary, publicity agent, can carry it around like a suit case.

Providentially, a new instrument of Apostolate has thus been placed in the hands of the Church; an instrument which, with its incalculable power of persuasion, offers an opportunity (if we are vigilant, determined and united) to win for Christ the Cinema of the future.

### A TECHNICAL RESEARCH

(CONTINUOUS FEED)

by L. R. Professor of the I.D.H.E.C., Paris

Whenever one discusses technical improvements in relation to the cinema, ideas turn towards the big fashionable problems: film in relief, colour, the cinema and television. These things focus the attention of most of the research workers. The overgrown development of the application of the cinema to the amusement of the masses masks the true character of the moving image, which is above all other things a means of expression, a language for communicating thought. The entertainment film, that trawls for audiences and manipulates fortunes, seeks above all the attraction of the sensational, and tends towards an increasingly complex technique, bigger and bigger budgets, more and more luxurious improvements. If that is quite reasonable, and justified as regards entertainment, the reverse is the case as regards the other uses to which film is put, those which represent the truest, noblest, and most authentic values for the film, uses whose universal application would obtain for the human and social worth of the film a recognition less mixed with reserve than that accorded to the prolific mass and unequal values of the works and solutions of the Seventh Art. Put differently and resumed in one sentence: the film remains a framework for thought, but is a medium which is much too expensive for its most interesting applications, - teaching, scientific research, education, and information, for example. It may be objected that we already have substandard film, in 16 mm, 9,5 mm and 8 mm, the already considerable development of school-room projection, and the new possibilities of education through television. That is all very well, as far as it goes, because it is agreed that substandard prints cost only one quarter or one fifth, apparently, the price of a print in 35 mm. But it does not, in fact, go far enough, because the comparison ought not to be made only in this sense. The other frameworks of thought transmission, above all the printed book, must also be considered. The use of film in schools could truly become generalised, take there the place of honour to which it is destined, render the irreplaceable services for which it is apt, but only when it becomes a scholastic material whose cost will represent for the school the same expenditure as the book or the wall-chart. Dreams and impossibilities, you may say. Not altogether, but blinded by the lavishness of the entertainment cinema we do not realise that a discovery like that of paper, or that of printing, with all the enormous consequences they brought to writing (another language, another means of transmitting thought), such a dis-

covery, I say, does not yet exist for the cinema. Nor do we realise, and that is much worse, that nobody cares a button, and that research workers are on the contrary turning their backs on the striving for economy, even though it be salutary and socially useful.

And yet possibilities exist, and are even still being subjected to research. For instance there is cellophane film, or more exactly ozaphane film, — a solution which represents for cinematographic writing what paper represents for printed writing. Then there is the multiple printer, able to produce prints more quickly and at minimum cost. And so we are getting towards more economical solutions. But this sphere does not claim one tenth part of the energy and tenacity which are devoted to colour or relief.

And then there is the problem of the "continuous feed" type of projection, which would replace the "flicker" by a uniform movement. The result would be a potential of thousands of screenings per print by the continuous system, against hundreds in "flickers".

For schools one can say without exaggeration the solution of this last problem is capital. It would bring the use of films for teaching within the reach of everyone, because of the hundredfold life of the print. There, to tell the truth, research workers have been many, and they have worn down their teeth on a nut that is hard to crack. The two great difficulties are: how to get as much light as with the flicker, and how to preserve perfect fixation of an image which is in continuous movement and must there fore be compensated by an optical system to make it appear motionless on the screen.

therefore be compensated by an optical system to have solved the problem. But as might be expected, the inventor has the greatest difficulty in breaking through and establishing his ideas. What if he had devoted his efforts to colour and relief? There, at least, the most extravagant promises would have unfailingly brought him the interest of the film industry, without him striking a blow!

But to return to the point, it is true that the entertainment cinema has harnessed us with blinkers, and we allow ourselves to be dazzled by the big lights of the supercinema, forgetting that nevertheless, with all their modesty, it is the projection lamps in our schools that give the true light.

But the sun is too near, and the stars too far

L. R. of l'IDHEC

## CATHOLIC ENTERPRISES

### SWISS CATHOLIC FILM CENTRE

Switzerland is politically united and does not suffer from the internal strife which troubles so many other countries. On the other hand, she is culturally very divided, since the inhabitants share three different languages and cultures — German, French and Italian.

The modes of expression and standards of judgement are so different in the various parts of Switzerland that a single system of rating for films seems to a large extent impossible. It would therefore be necessary, for the national centre in order to observe the requirements of the encyclical "Vigilanti Cura" and at the same time to meet practical difficulties, to consist of three different sections one for each of the national languages.

Our position resembles that of Belgium (French and Flemish) but is aggravated by the fact that not only is the population of Switzerland a mere four millions but that their four millions are moreover extremely divided from a religions point of view. Only two-fifths are Catholic. Further, the Catholics, for the most part, live in the country districts. All the marge cities, Zürich, Bâle, Geneva and Berne have a large Protestant majority. It is for this reason that the spiritual basis of our Catholic Action in regard to films is not strong and we can count on only about a million and a half Catholics to support it.

On the other hand, the importation of foreign films into Switzerland is considerable. In 1946, it was 420 items. Therefore the task of reviewing is as great as in any other country. In spite of these real difficulties, Swiss Catholics have courageously set themselves to carry out the requirements of the Encyclical.

Catholic Film Action is attached to the central organization of Catholio Action for men, the S. K. V. V. (Schweiz. Katholischer Volksverein) or A. P. C. S. (Association Populaire des Catholiques Suisses). This national organization which covers the whole of Switzerland and represents the spiritual and cultural interests of Swiss Catholics, has entrusted the practical work in the field of the cinema to a special section, the A. P. C. S. Film Commission (Filmkommission S. K. V. V.).

The method of working is exactly that enjoined by the Encyclical.

#### 1. Rating.

The Film Commission maintains at Zürich the "Stabile pro tota natione inspectionis officium", that is, central well-equipped bureau upon which as far as is possible falls the duty of judging and rating the films presented in public theatres. Since its foundation about 1,800 films have been classified. The ratings, which approximate to those adopted by the General Council of the O. C. I. C. for international relations, are as follows:

1. For children. 2. Universal 3. For adults. 4. With reservations. 5. Rejected.

This task is rendered heavier by the fact that in Switzerland the custom of "Trade Shows" is not known and it is therefore necessary, unless one is invited to a private showing by a cinema manager or director, to wait until the films are first shown in the cinemas. We work on the principle that each film of any importance should be seen and judged by several people, especially if the preliminary indications from other national centres show disagreement. Fortunately most important films are first shown in Zürich.

#### II. Publication of Ratings.

The official publication of ratings is by means of a special fortnightly publication "Filmberater". This review consists of two parts: (a) Four detailed critiques printed on the actual cover so as to form, when cut off, index cards. Thus 8 of the more important films are brought each month to the reader's special attention. (b) Once a month, eight pages of text are added to the detailed reviews. The reader finds the complete list of films classified since the last issue with a short five or six line appreciation. The remainder of the space left is taken up by leading articles on various film problems.

"Filmberater" is intended primarily for those in authority (censors, superiors, priests and teachers), as well as to theatre directors, who wish before taking a decision about a film to acquaint themselves with its aesthetic and moral value. For this reasan its circulation is rather limited.

Communicating the ratings to the public at large is done through the daily press and through local bulletins available to cinemagoers. Thus three large daily papers publish every week the list of films to help their readers in their choice of programme.

Furher, the national centre maintains an important card index of new and old films, comprising some 6,000 entries. Thanks to this documentation, the editorial staff of "Filmberater" is in a position to give from day to day the necessary information to those who wish to know the value of films which are to be or are already featured in programmes.

It goes without saying that opinions coming from abroad, such as the ratings of the "Legion of Decency" of New York, of the "Centro Cattolico Cinematografico" of Rome, of the "Centrale Catholique du Cinéma" of Paris, of the "Selection Commission" of Brussels and others, are very useful and especially appreciated when they concern films which have not yet been shown in Switzerland.

#### III. Influence on the Industry.

Our national centre has often had the opportunity of intervening in the production of films, especially when there is question of scenes in which priests or religious customs are portrayed.

Influence on theatres is considerable, particularly in Catholic localities. Quite a large number of managers regularly approach the Centre for the choice of their films. It has even happened that a film rental company has refused to import a film before asking the advice of our Centre, so as to avoid trouble when the film comes to be shown.

### IV. Organization and Education of the Public.

The ideal, according to the Encyclical, is to create in each country a sort of "Legion of Decency" on the lines followed by american catholics. In view of the special conditions in Switzerland it has only been possible to conform with its requirements in one instance. On the initiative of the national centre, there has for many

"Atomic Physics"

The camera's eye witnesses the present ...



G. B. Instructional



... and the past

"mediaeval monastery"

# OCIC- News Items

1. CITTÁ DEL VATICANO — His Excellency, Mgr. MONTINI at a screening of "The Fugitive".



 LIMA — His Excellency Mgr. PEREZ SILVA, Auxiliary Bishop of Lima, and Prof. ARROSPIDE DE LA FLOR, General President of Peruvian Catholic Action, welcome our General Secretary at the airport at Limatambo.



 VENEZIA — Count ZORZI, Director of the Biennale, surrounded by members of the General Council of OCIC.

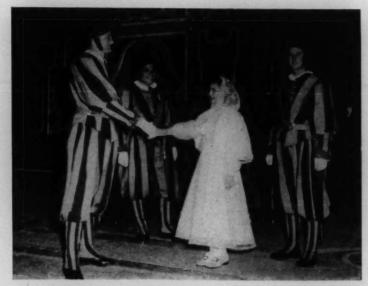




4. BILLANCOURT — Standing near the camera which has already photographed "MONSIEUR VINCENT", M. CLOCHE and cameraman Cl. RENOIR chat with Rev. J. A. V. BURKE and Father DECLAN, during a visit which these representatives of "FOCUS", paid to the studios to see the making of "DR. LAENNEC".



5. PARIS — Gaumont-Palace. The President of OCIC hands our Award to Mr. LISSIM, R. K. O., for "THE FUGITIVE".



6. CITTÁ DEL VATICANO — The young American star, Margaret O'BRIEN, greets the Swiss Guards after an audience with the Holy Father.

years existed in Zürich a Catholic "Good Films League" which publishes a bulletin for its members each week and expresses Catholic interests in the field of the cinema to the civil authorities.

But systematic education of the public, in the sense of a Christian outlook as regards the cinema, is nevertheless not neglected in the rest of Switzerland. Apart from press contributions in the daily and weekly papers and the publication of special brochures on matters of principle this slow but fruitful education is principally carried out by means of "Film Sundays" in the parishes. On these occasions the editor of "Filmberater" undertakes all the morning sermons and, so far as is required, discussion groups for the parish. These "Film Sundays" are of great assistance in creating a Christian viewpoint as regards the screen and in giving those who cannot see anything in the cinema but a means of damnation a more just appreciation of this means of influencing minds, founded on the directive of the Encyclical.

Dr. Charles Reinert.

### MEETING OF THE O. C. I. C. GENERAL COMMITTEE.

Far from limiting its discussions to administrative matters at its last meeting, held in Venice August 28th—September 1st, 1948, the General Committee, as at the Rome meeting of 1946, discussed far wider issues.

O. C. I. C. considers the organisation of international congresses and annual meetings of Catholic film activities all over the world most valuable, if not indispensable. For this reason, besides the official delegates of member countries who form the General Committee and who bring three colleagues with them, invitations were also sent to representatives of countries not yet affiliated as well as to delegates from other international Catholic organisations.

In fact the Venice meeting was of the first importance, as much for the number of countries taking part, including several from the New World, as for the magnitude of the subjects discussed.

At the kind invitation of the organisers of the Venice "Biennale" the meeting was held within the framework of this Exhibition of Film Art.

A special international Jury, appointed by the Administrative Committee, sat during the whole Festival to award the 1948 O. C. I. C. prize to ,,the film which makes the greatest contribution to the spiritual and moral betterment of humanity".

The following new delegates from countries already members were admitted to the General Committee during an administrative meeting: the Abbé J. DEWAVRIN (France), Rev. Father P. MASTERSON (U. S. A) and M. Ing. U. SCIASCIA (Italy). The Committee then accepted the following countries as members of the O. C. I. C.: Malta, whose representative will be the Reverend S. LASPINA (President of the Film Section, Malta Catholic Institute) and Uruguay, represented by M. Ing. F. SONEIRA. The Administrative Committee was then re-elected in part, and is now composed of: Abbé J. BERNARD (President), Dr. Ch. REINERT (Switzerland), Rev. J. A. V. BURKE (G. B.), Rev. P. MASTERSON (U. S. A), Abbé DEWAVRIN (France), Ing. U. SCIASCIA (Italy), Ing. F. SONEIRA (Uruguay), Mlle. Y. de HEMP-TINNE, General Secretary, and André RUSZKOWSKI, Secretary General for External Relations.

General meetings were devoted to the study of the report of the General Secretariat, and to the General Secretary for External Relations' report on his exploratory trip to Latin America; an international exchange of moral classifications of films was discussed, and also the attitude of O. C. I. C. in the cultural sphere of the cinema, with particular reference to the International Film Review. Notable contributions were made by Mrs. LOORAM, president of the National Legion of Decency Censorship Committee (U. S. A), by Dr. F. NAVARRO (Italy) on O. C. I. C.'s share in the film side of the Holy Year of 1950 in Rome, and by the Rev. J. A. V. BURKE, who called for a crusade of prayer for the film Apostolate.

The public sessions of the Festival were of great benefit to O. C. I. C. delegates, and a private showing enabled them to see Andrew BU-CHANAN's film, VISITATION, presented by the London Catholic Film Society and which tells the story of the heroic work of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

Y. H.

#### PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE URUGUAYAN HIERARCHY

Uruguayan Catholic Action has revised the system of moral classification of films in conformity with the wishes expressed at the 1947 International Catholic Cinema Congress at Brussels, and the following categories have been adopted:

- 1. Permissible for all
  - a) Including children
  - b) Not recommended for children under the age of 11.
- 2. Permissible for adults
  - a) Including adolescents (over 15 years of age)
  - b) With reservations (not recommended for those under 21)
  - c) Serious reservations (those with formed judgement).
- 3. Not recommended. Undesirable elements dominant.
- 4. Forbidden.

The new classifications, approved by the Uruguayan Hierarchy, form the sub, ject of a joint Pastoral Letter published on September 10th, 1948, the essence of which is as follows:

"No one is unaware of the part played by the cinema in bringing about the collapse of moral standards which is taking place. We Bishops are therefore under a grave moral obligation not only to warn priests, teachers and the faithful, but also to give them clear and precise guidance in the matter of the films that may be seen.

In order to fulfill this obligation, and to facilitate the truly meritorious work of the National Secretariat for the Defense of Christian Morals, which undertakes the difficult task of classification, we have decided to accept the unified world classifications, with their terminology, already published by the Secretariat.

In order to enhance the value and efficacy of the new categories we deem it important publicly to approve them, and to make some observations on this subject.

In the first place, we remind Catholics that they ought not to see any films that are not classified. This is a sacrifice owed to the Christian conscience.

The positive categories, such as 1) and 2a), do not signify approval or recommendation of the film; and it is therefore possible that some films in these categories may be harmful for certain individuals. In such cases,

the Confessor or Spiritual Director must judge.

When category 2b) forbids the presence of young people we include, generally speaking, all who are unmarried. Confessors and Spiritual Directors should not, "onerata conscientia", easily open the door to young people who have reached their majority but are still single.

In the same way, Confessors and Spiritual Directors should not lightly give general permission for films in group 2 c).

Films in group 3), since "undesirable elements are dominant" and "they
can be harmful even to adults with formed
judgement", must not be seen without
special permission, and those responsible may not "onerata conscientia et
quidem sub gravi" give any general
permission without our express sanction, and they will be very chary
concerning films in category 4), for
it is obvious that attendance at such
shows is forbidden.

As you see, there is no question, either on our part or on the part of those whose task it is to make the classifications, of yielding an inch of ground in the matter of christian morals. Rather is it a case of restoring them as far as possible, for without them we shall never be able to save the world from the chaos that threatens it.

We are certain, dear brethren, priests and people, that you will form the most solemn resolution to follow these basic moral safeguards, and we give you all our blessing, especially those who have devoted themselves to the work of the National Secretariat for the Defense of Christian Morals, and those who work on the censorship committees. Given at Montevideo, September 10th, 1948".

Then come the signatures of His Eminence Mgr. Antonio Maria Barbieri, Archbishop of Montevideo, and the Bishops of Florida and of Salto.

### GREAT BRITAIN CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY

Annual General meeting

A large and attentive audience heard His Eminence Cardinal Griffin speak on the need for a constructive attitude towards the cinema when he presided at the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Film Society in London on December 15th.

Quoting the words of Pope Pius XI, that the duty of the National Centres was ,, to promote good motion pictures, classify the others and bring this judgement to the knowledge of priests and faithful", Cardinal Griffin said that, all too often, people took the negative attitude; as if the Pope had said: ,, Condemn the bad films, list those not so bad, and those less bad, and tolerate the others". The Catholic Film Society was doing a good work in training people to look at films intelligently.

Miss Dilys Powell, the film critic of the "Sunday Times" gave a talk on "The Duties of the Film Critic", and Father H. A. C. Connell, of the Brompton Oratory, lectured on "Religion and Film".

#### A New Film on the Mass.

The Catholic Film Society is to present early in 1949 a film made by Alan Turner. It is called "THE SACRIFICE WE OFFER" and is in 16 m/m Kodachrome. It is four reels in length and deals with the Mass as centre and source of daily spirituality for working people of all kinds, from factory mechanics, to housewives, office workers and professional dancers. It explains the meaning and use of the vestments and actions of the Mass and has a commentary written by Father Hubert Mc Evoy S. J. It is remarkable in that it has the Imprimatur of the Bishop of Nottingham; the first time, we think, that such a distinction has been attached to a film.

It will be distributed by the Catholic Film Society, London, and will be released in April 1949. The Commentary will be published separately with pictures from the film. All details from: The Secretary, Catholic Film Society, 20 Ovington Gardens, London, S. W. 3.

#### Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

The Catholic Film Society is producing a film on the Cross Prilgrimage to Walsingham which took place in July 1948. The Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham is one of the famous pilgrimage centres of old times and was destroyed at the Reformation. It has now attracted new attention and its importance as a centre of national prayer is growing anew. Groups of young Catholic men carried large wooden crosses, to the

number of 14, to this shrine last year. The crosses were very heavy and the men walked long distances, sometimes as much as 250 miles. The pilgrimage offers obvious possibilities from the point of view of film. Andrew Buchanan is producer and the Commentary is written by the Rev. J. A. V. Burke. The film will be available in 35 m/m and 16 m/m and will be ready in January 1949.

J. A. V. Burke, Hon. Secr., C. F. S.

#### RENEWAL OF CATHOLIC FILM ACTION IN GERMANY

The first Catholic documentary film to be made since the war has been produced in Germany.

It takes the form of a report of the centenary celebrations of Cologne Cathedral. Entitled, "700 JAHRE KÖLN DOM", it gives in 14 minutes, something of its history, its present condition and the reconstruction which is taking place, and also an account of the Jubilee Celebrations which took place in the presence of foreign Cardinals. The German version is introduced by His Eminence, Cardinal Frings and the English version by Cardinal Griffin. The film was produced by the Hamburg Newsfilm Agency "Welt im Film". Dr. Weiss, Director. (Wires: Weltfilm, Hamburg, Shellhauss).

Thus is the first step towards Catholic film production in Germany taken.

Regular moral classification of films in the three Western Zones has now been renewed. The Classifications conform to the international system adopted by the O. C. I. C. at its Congress in Brussels in 1947. These are communicated to the public through the agency of church periodicals and by means of a system of leaflets published in the churches under the aegis of "Katholischer Filmdienst."

In September 1948 a retrospective and complete list of films distributed in Germany (since the war) was published at the request of the German Hierarchy by the Central Film Office of Cologne. Of the 48 British films named, only one was condemned and one placed on the Not-recommended list. Of 92 American films none was condemned and only two were positively not-recommended. On the other hand, of 121 French films

shown, 8 were condemned and 24 not-recommended.

The large number of French films considered morally objectionable has caused certain Catholic organisations, especially Young Catholic Girls, to try, through the mediation of their International Federations, to induce the French authorities to submit a better choice of films to represent French culture in Germany. It is of interest to point out that in most cases the appraisals of the German Catholic Cinema Office have been identical to, if not more favourable than the Centrale Catholique du Cinéma.

Lastly, of the 12 German films actually being shown at the present time, two have been classified as Not-recommended.

In the instructions issued to the faithful when this list was published, the Cinema Office pointed out that it was not intended to give a recommendation with regard to programmes, but only a guide which did not bind in conscience. The Bishops did not wish to attach to these appraisals the sanction of sin. Nevertheless, the faithful are invited to organise mass reactions and to "follow up" these listss, thus ensuring an effective influence being brought to bear on film production.

The Catholic Cinema Movement ought, therefore, to develop under the inspiration of the following watchword: "Praise the Good Film, Condemn the Mediocre Film."

The film critics of the Catholic Press follow the lead given by the Catholic Cinema Office, from the point of moral classification of films but reserve the right to say what they choose in the matter of artistic and intellectual appreciation. Indeed they are encouraged to develop this aspect of films more and more in their reviews and articles.

This attitude it was that inspired the recent "Katholikentag" held at Mainz where a Special Cinema Commission, under the chairmanship of Dr. Wilhelm Berning, Bishop of Osnabrück, was entrusted by the Fulda Conference with the task of examining the problems presented by the cinema. The following points summarise their findings:

1) — The positive attitude of the Church with regard to the good cinema from both the moral and artistic

viewpoint, is based on the words of the Holy Father.

It is indispensable that the Christian conscience should be enlightened about the importance of the cinema in modern life. In order to utilise its constructive possibilities to the full as well as to stem its noxious power, it is essential that Catholic public opinion, both clerical and lay, should be awakened to the need of a Catholic Cinema Movement.

Such a Movement would advise the Christian public about films being distributed, basing its advice on the dictates of the Natural Law and the Decalogue; it would provide instruction on the elements of film appreciation, enabling the public to encourage the good and to reject the mediocre. This supposes a disciplined attitude on the part of the Catholic public which is invited to avail itself of the cinema service provided by the German Hierarchy.

- 2). The Cinema Commission has noted with lively interest the efforts that have been made to create an Autonomous Control of the German Cinema Industry, efforts with which it is prepared to associate itself. Such collaboration has been made more concrete since the nomination of the present writer to act in company with the Protestant delegate Pfr. Hess, of Frankfurt, as delegate for the Catholic Church.
- 3) A Special Commission, which met at Biebrich, near Wiesbaden, on October 7th, 1948, was formed to deal with problems relating to production.
- 4) It was decided to reconstitute the group of Catholic Halls on a cooperative basis and to insist on being free to choose freely among the films offered by the distributors.

Dr. Anton Kochs.

### THE CINEMA ENTERS THE PARIS CATHOLIC INSTITUTE.

For the first time the venerable lecture rooms of the Paris Catholic Institute are being used as classrooms for film specialists.

This fact has some significance, even though the courses are not given under the direct responsibility of the Institute itself, for this is a case of an independent enterprise, inspired by the example of the "Pro Deo" atRome, whose President, Rev. F. Morlion, O. P. was also the courageous pro-

moter of this new venture. The cinema is here part of a wider teaching, for all the phenomena of modern public opinion are included. The very name of the new school is indicative: "Institute of the Science of Public Opinion".

On November 17th, 1948, Maurice Cloche, director of "MONSIEUR VINCENT", gave the first lecture on "Dramatic Laws governing the Christian Film". Subsequent lectures, organised by our General Secretary, André Ruszkowski, deal with the elements of the film "language" (G. Damas), the makers of a film (J.-P. Chartier), economic problems of the cinema (P. Gérin), film rhythm (G. Damas), Christian dialectic in the analysis of a film's central theme (Rev. F. Morlion, O. P.), criticism of film art (M. de St. Pierre), responsibility of the film critic (J.-P. Chartier), intellectual creation of a film (L o D u c a), the formation of public opinion in matters of the cinema (André Ruszkowski), realism and fantasy in film (Rev. L. Lunders, O. P.), relations between art and morals in the cinema (J. G. Auriol).

Besides theoretical courses, practical work is planned for the students, with a view to the formation both of critics and scenario writers.

The organisers of this series of lectures look on their first year's work as an experiment which should serve as a guide for the work of the years to come.

a. r.

### A CATHOLIC FILM INSTITUTE IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Katholiek Institute voor Filmscholing (K. I. F) (Catholic Institute for Film Education) was founded in Holland on July 31st 1948.

The first essential, is the development of critical faculties in audiences, so that they will not accept shallow or evil films but will show a preference for films with some artistic, educative and moral value. To this end K. I. F. has started a correspondence course, intended mainly for those responsible for the education of youth (priests, youth leaders, teachers, journalists, etc.). The course of 52 lessons explains the main problems connected with the cinema and gives a summary of its historical and aesthetic development. Study evenings underline the more important points. K. I. F. also has an information service and a library. There are, as well, various publications which aim at the development of the critical faculties of the general public.

The formation of competent cinema technicians will be cared for by the opening of a college for those who wish to participate in film production or to study the science of film (philosophy of film, psychology, aesthetic, ethics of film, etc.). This college will have two sections:

- a) Scientific section: (obligatory in part for pupils of section two) for the formation of critics, film scholars, etc., and also for scenarists and directors.
- b) Technical section: for the education of producers, operators, architects and decor artists, assistants, camera-men, script-girls, etc.

In view of the difficulties still attendant on the opening of a Dutch studio, K. I. F. envisages the possibility of setting up production teams which would be sent abroad to make films.

K. I. F., although founded with the authorisation of K. F. A. (Katholieke Filmaktie), feels that as far as possible co-operation with all organisations pursuing similar ends is necessary.

Already K. I. F. has aroused a lively interest in Holland. His Eminence, Cardinal J. de Jong wrote recently to the Director of the Institute:

"As you are deeply convinced of the need for a Catholic Institute whose aim shall be to give a certain education in film to all whose mission is the formation of youth, we can but admire your bold initiative — the more so in view of the great difficulties which you doubtless encounter. In any case, such enterprise is admirable, and we hope with all our heart that it may attain its object, which is the education of Catholics in the sphere of the Cinema."

In student circles in particular the development of the Institute is closely followed, and there are already several K. I. F. ciné-clubs.

J. K. Gribling. Director of the K. I. F.

# REVEREND PAUL DONCOEUR, S. J. FILM-WORKERS' CHAPLAIN.

Having taken on the position of historical adviser during the making of Hollywood's "JOAN OF ARC", Father Doncoeur acceptod, on his return to France, the position of Chaplain to the Union Catholique du Cinéma, an organisation which gathers together a hundred or so professionals of the Paris film industry. For their benefit Father Doncoeur is to give a series of conferences on Christ and the Dramatic Vision of the Modern World.

#### ABEL GANCE WORKS ON THE "DIVINE TRAGEDY".

Abel Gance, the celebrated author of "J'ACCUSE", "NAPOLEON" and many other films which have contributed something new to the language of the cinema, hopes shortly to begin work on the realisation of the great project which has occupied his mind for many years. Under the title "THE DIVINE TRAGEDY", he intends to bring the Passion of Our Saviour to life in the screen, but in such a way as to make the spectator understand how the story reaches down to our own day.

Starting from a conception of the story which is from every point of view entirely fresh, the scénario which G a n c e has written will demand of its director the greatest command of all the resources of the cinema and, indeed, of inventions without which some of the details will be impossible of realisation.

Completely penetrated with the spirit of charity towards God and man, this film should transmit intact its message of Love, flowing from the Divine Sacrifice, without antagonising anyone, of whatever creed.

Our Review fully aware of the moral and material hazards which such an undertaking involves, considers it its duty to give the moral support to "THE DIVINE TRAGEDY", and expresses the warmest good wishes for success to its courageous promotors.

#### FILM ON THE VOCATION.

A recent production not destined for commercial exhibition will be of particular interest to all Catholic organisations, especially those concerned with youth.

"LUMIERE SUR LA ROUTE", made by Pierre Boyer, a pioneer

of amateur cinematography, for the Centre de Documentation Sacerdotale in Paris, 19, rue de Varennes, (7-e), tells in 40 minutes, with great simplicity, the story of a vocation. It could be a useful stimulus for vocations to the priesthood amongst youth in schools and Catholic organisations.

#### A PIONEER DEPARTS . . . .

One of the first Catholics to realise the necessity of using the cinema in a good cause, Father Danion, himself an author of documentary films with "LES RELIGIEUX, ANCIENS COMBATTANTS", died recently in the village of Domrémy, Joan of Arc's birthplace. Let us pray for the repose of his soul.

# THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE C. I. N. E. GROUP IN ARGENTINA.

It gives us particular pleasure to draw attention to the establishment, in Argentina, of a new Catholic cultural film organisation, which was set up in Buenos Aires after the visit of the Secretary General, O. C. I. C.

In a declaration dated September, 1948, the new organisation sets out its aims (from the abbreviation of which comes the name C. I. N. E.). They are, in effect, to

- 1) Co-operate with all well-disposed pro-
- Inspire the production of films of high moral and artistic standard:
- Neutralise the pernicious effects of objectionable films.
- 4) Encourage scattered energies, with a view to the establishment of a genuine valuation of the 7th Art.

The declaration also calls for film education in the schools: it offers the film industry the assistance of a disinterested group in the drawing up of a more complete production code and it announces special prizes to be awarded for valuable work by cineastes.

C. I. N. E. organised a first film debate on October 25th, 1948, in the "Suipacha" Cinema, with the showing of the French film, "MONSIEUR

VINCENT". Roman Viñoly Barreto, the young Argentine director, analysed the film's technical qualities, while Dr. Enrique Padilla, President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, discussed the spiritual profile of the Saint.

Under the auspices of C. I. N. E. a Mass for Argentine film artists and

technicians was celebrated by the Rev. Raul Entraigas, ecclesiastical adviser to the "TIERRA DE FUEGO", on November 28th in the Church of San Carlos.

The Secretary General of the new organisation is Dr. Romulo E. Rojo Cardenas (Av. Alvear 1402, 1-er piso, Buenos Aires).

### **ECHOS**

MONTEVIDEO'S
PARLIAMENT EXERCISED
OVER THE INFLUENCE OF
FILMS ON YOUTH.

On September 9th the Chamber discussed the grave problems created with regard to children and films by the immorality frequently pictured in certain cinema shows.

Madame Emilia Valverde de Grana, a Deputy, opened the debate with a clear and firm statement. She said she was sorry to see the cinema called to such an exalted destiny- in the process of destroying the best traditions and weakening moral influence more and more. She made particular reference to the harm suffered by adolescents and the disastrous results of a cinema that is uncontrolled.

Following her demand that the text of her discourse should be sent, in extenso, to the Ministers of Public Instruction and Social Assistance, Deputy Eduardo Terra Arocena, undertook to forward the text as an expression of the mind of the Chamber on the matter. This was agreed to by all the various political sections.

R. O. V.

#### RELIGIOUS FILMS AND THE A. RANK ORGANISATION.

It is said that the impelling motive which brought Mr. Rank into the film industry was the desire to make an outstanding contribution to the very small repertory of worthwhile religious films. It is certain that he still has the intention of producing such a film. In a conversation with

the present writer last year he declared that he still hoped to make a film of the life of Mary Magdalen. Unfortunately, rumour has coupled the name of Margaret Lock-wood withe the role of the Penitent Saint and whatever the merits of this lady as an actress may be, the films in which she has lately appeared have served only to stereotype her as a "glamour girl". To name her as the protagonist in "MARY MAGDALEN" is to court almost certain derision and misunderstanding.

Parents and educationists owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Rank if only for the trouble he has put himself to in organising the Instructional and Children's Entertainment departments of his Film Organisation. However, it is fair to say that the weakest section of these departments is the one entitled "religious instruction". Apart from a few background films comprising "TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO" about which some purists have quarelled, there is only a series of rather oddly chosen nature films which have been made to serve a purpose as apologetic essays in natural theology.

Early this year, much publicity was given to the project which the Rank Organisation had mooted, whereby one of their studios was placed at the disposal of religious groups who wished to make films. At the time there was considerable speculation and much misunderstanding. Eventually two films were announced as being under production: "RUTH" and "THE WEDDING FEAST". These were recently shown to a special audience in London. I think it is no secret to say that the Rank Organisation was ill-pleased with these films. I am not surpised. With

all the wealth of the Scriptures for dramatic inspiration and every upto-date device of cinema studio at their disposal, the makers of these films, one would have thought, could hardly have failed to produce films of beauty and power. Instead, they have given us Sunday School Tracts, all the more pitiable for having the appearance of studio glamour with a conspicuous lack of imagination and dramatic ability. "RUTH" is static to boredom; "THE WEDDING FEAST" ist reminiscent of a village dramatic society's efforts to produce a Nativity Play.

A third film shown with the other two is "BALTHAZAR'S FEAST". This is a film sermon preached by the Anglican Bishop of Rochester and is an experiment made to see whether this kind of film evangelism is likely to appeal to the folk unable or unwilling to come to the great cathedrals. It is not for a Catholic priest to criticise such an effort beyond saying that the film magnifies most embarrassingly the face and mannerisms of the preacher and that it could not but have an unfortunate effect upon any normal congregation.

To return to the other two films: they suffer the crowning defect in any "religious" film: they are "chur-chy". They never convince us that they are more than pious attempts to give us a "stunt". Questions of cost and available apparatus have a place in any discussion on religious films but I will not enlarge on that point here. I will say, however, that until films are pruduced which are as effective in presenting Biblical characters on the screen as Dorothy Sayer's radio plays, "THE MAN BORN TO BE KING", were effec-tive in presenting Biblical characters on the air, it is not likely that the greater public for whom, presumably, these religious films are intended, will be interested in or captivated by the message of Christianity. I say this in all charity and aware that though the Church of England is primarily implicated in this criticism, the Catholic Church, also, has failed, if, indeed, it has attempted, to use the film for God with integrity and competence. "MONSIEUR VIN-CENT", yes, but that is not quite the sort of film we have here in mind, wonderful and unforgetable as it is. "THE DIVINE TRAGEDY", a film about the Passion of Our Lord,

promises to give us what we are longing to see.

In the meantime, we have the right to complain that the greatest and most powerful film group in England has failed to give us the religious films which its Organiser has led us to expect.

J. A. V. B.

### BOOKS

Abel BROHÉE. "Cinéma et Apostolat Paroissial". Brochure, 64 pages. (Editions de la Pensée Catholique, Quai Mativa, Liége 1948).

Canon Brohée, a few days before his death, put the finishing touches to the "spiritual testament" which is the witness to his 25 years of unremitting efforts in the Apostolate of the Cinema, written in a style that is direct, incisive and burning with conviction.

This masterly study looks to the day when the Catholic public, as a result of the efforts of the parochial clergy and under the direction of the Hierarchy, will be completely and systematically organised to deal with the problem of the cinema. Such organisation demands a national, nay, an international plane for its perfect achievement.

Referring to the insistant invitations emanating from Rome and Malines, the author recalls that "the first objective of the pastor of souls is to ensure that the faithful do not take in film shows which are offensive to the Faith and injurious to Christian morality". "It is the teaching of the Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura", he writes, "and it is accepted needless to say, by the Fifth (Provincial) Council of Malines".

The question of the cinema becomes an integral part of the pastoral care, therefore. "Among the duties which are incumbent upon them" says Pius XI, "is the obligation to exercise vigilance over the kind of recreation in which their people indulge". The Malines Council also clearly states that "it falls to the lot of the pastors of souls to give definite and precise guidance to the faithful so that their obligations in this matter may be understood". It follows from this that the pastoral clergy are the natural recruiting ground from which the "Holy Crusdae", demanded by the Holy Father, may be constituted.

Among the activities which the author suggests may be undertaken by parish priests in this connection, are the organisation of a local section of "The Catholic League of The Film" 1) which has the duty of publishing the lists of the Selection Committee, and the arranging of frequent and regular lectures and conferences to inform the faithful with regard to the teaching of the Film Encyclical.

For the film is a vehicle of ideas propagated by means of a power which is unparalleled, and whose influence for evil derives not only from its erroneous attitude to sex, but principally because it is, in effect, a kind of school, teaching in precise and clear terms, a philosophy and doctrine on every subject under the sun.

If this realistic synthesis, weighty with philosophy and presented with vigour by an apostle who knew what he was talking about, is addressed primarily to the clergy, it nevertheless provides a subject of practical interest to all those who have the best interests of their country at heart.

1) The Catholic League of The Film, is a Belgian organisation which devotes itself to the spiritual side of the Film Apostolate by means of prayer and other spiritual activities. (Translator).

RÉPERTOIRE GÉNÉRAL ILLUS-TRÉ DES FILMS, 1948—49, CCR, Paris. Ed. *Penser Vrai*, 21, bd. Montmartre, 1 vol., 450 pp.

This is an illustrated General Catalogue of films for the years 1948—49. We recommend this very complete list to all those who wish to know anything about the moral standards of the films which have been reviewed by the French Catholic Cinema Office.

MOTION PICTURE ALMANAC 1949. Quigley Publications, Rockefeller Center, New York.

The most complete documentation of the Cinema industry in the United States and other producer countries.

FILMLEXIKON Piccola Enciclopedia Cinematógrafica, Milan. Filmeuropa, 1948. 700 pages.

The Kleine Filmlexikon published in Switzerland by Dr. Charles Reinert two years ago, archieved a notable success both at home and abroad.

At the beginning of 1948 Filmeuropa publications brought out an enlarged version of this work, indispensable to all lovers of film, with the addition of more detailed information about Italian films and facts of general interest. The result is an increase of more than 300 pages of text.

The work is divided into three parts. The first deals with the historical, technical and aesthetic side; the second is devoted to biography and the third, enlarged by Francesco Pasinetti, distinguished adaptor of the Italian edition, contains an important film bibliography.

Richly illustrated with stills from productions old and new, this book will be of great value to Italians and to cineastes all over the world.

G. G.

THREE HISTORIES OF THE CINEMA.

MAGIC SHADOWS. The Story of the Origin of Motion Pictures. By Martin Quigley Jr., New York, Georggetown University Press Book. 191 p. illustrated, 3.50: London, Quigley Publications, 17/6.

Son and colleague of the great editor of American Film publications (Motion Picture Herald, Motion Picture Almanac, etc.) Martin Quigley has always been one of the most forceful and courageous exponents of a Christian cinema. He has just published an important summary of film history, richly documented, and with a broad general rather than detailed, technical interest. We shall have more to say on a future occasion about this book, which is indispensable to anyone who seeks to understand the swift development of the American film industry.

THE HISTORY OF THE BRI-TISH FILM, 1896—1906. By Rachel Low and Roger Manvell. London, 1948. Allen et Unwin. 21/—.

The first volume of a monumental history of the British film, written

with great objectivity by a partnership working within the framework of the British Film Institute, is the latest addition to the steadily growing collection of books whose subject is the prodigious development of film technique and art.

HISTOIRE ENCYCLOPEDIQUE DU CINEMA. I. Le Cinéma Français 1895—1929. by René Jeanne et Charles Ford. Paris 1948. Robert Laffont. 520 p., ill., 500 francs.

Making no claims to establish definite aesthetic rules or to defend any particular theory of film, the authors of this work, which is to run to four large volumes, give the reader the benefit of an abundant and very interesting documentation, which they have brought to light from their archives. Veterans of the film press, they have witnessed personally most of the events of which they write. The first volume is devoted to the silent film in France, and some of the illustrations are unobtainable elsewhere.

IL LINGUAGGIO DEL FILM. By Renato May. No. 3, Biblioteca Cinematografica. Milan, Poligone, 1947. 204 pp., ill.

A good introduction to the essential elements of cinematography, explained with the help of numerous graphics and photographs. The author is a professor on the staff of the *Pro Deo* International University at Rome, where he devotes himself to the study of a Catholic Philosophy of the Cinema.

LE TABLEAU BLANC, by André Lang. Pairs. Horizons de France, 1948. 244 pp., 250 francs.

Small in size but large in scope, this is a work which, in spite of its non-Catholic authorship, we particularly recommend to educationalists and to those who are actively engaged in Catholic Film Action.

We regret, however, that a pamphlet written by Mr. Parker, a non-Catholic for whom we have the greatest esteem, should be quoted as an authoritative statement of the Church's attitude to the Cinema (p. 197), and that no space has been given to the conctructive nature of that attitude.

The author displays clearly the enormous part played by the ci-

nema in contemporary mass education, and he stresses the responsibility of teachers and the need for Governments to give more time in education to this new influence.

On censorship he has a balanced outlook. Here again, there is no adequate understanding of the Catholic attitude, but he goes to the heart of the problem.

Finally, a precise and useful reference table is furnished in appendices which deal with the various institutions knowledge of which can be of use to all who are interested in the moral and intellectual betterment of the Cinema.

a. r.

VISITATION. The Film Story of the Medical Missionaries of Mary. By Andrew Buchanan. London. Catholic Film Society, 1948. 126 p., ill. 5/-.

In a book which is notable for simplicity and sincerity, Andrew Buchanan describes the innumerable difficulties which have to be surmounted by the cineaste who sets out to make a simple documentary film on the work of Missionary Sisters in South Africa. He tells the day to day story of the making of the film "VISITATION", a picture of the work of a heroic religious order whose members are all doctors and specialists in the treatment of leprosy and other tropical diseases.

In the foreword, His Eminence Cardinal Griffin stresses the necessity for entrusting the making of religious films to really competent technicians.

Both film and book are distributed under the auspices of our friends, the London Catholic Film Society, and we wish them every success.

ANATOMY OF THE FILM by H. H. Wollenberg, London, Marshland Publications, 1947.

There are many books written about the art of films but very few that have the art of telling the reader much about the art of film. "ANATOMY OF THE FILM" is one of the exceptions. It is an illustrated guide to film appreciation and is based on a series of lectures given under the auspices of Cambridge University. Dr. Wollenberg tells in untechnical language, the story of the

development of the idea of the reproduction of moving pictures, from the polished steel mirrors of the Egyptians which enabled the movements of figures in the sunshine to be transmitted to a screen in a darkened room, the latest peculiarities of style which now differentiate the national studios. The illustrations tell their part of the story by contrasting periods and characteristics in film production.

Dr. Wollenberg allows himself the luxury of a bias in favour of British films and methods of production. Nevertheless, he is truly international in his sympathies for the future. "If we regard the film, as we undoubtedly do, as a new artistic medium, then we must presume that every nation should have full possibilities to express itself to the world through the screen, as it has through the centuries developed its own literature, music, painting and so on".

The Catholic reader will be gratified that the author faces the tremendous fact of the moral power of the film and asks for a sense of responsibility on the part of those who make films. He quotes a speech of Sir Stafford Cripps: ,, It is more important than ever that the peoples of the world should get to know each other, that they should understand how their neighbours live, what are their difficulties, their desires, and indeed, what are the fears of the different nations. It becomes of extreme importance that we should use every means at our disposal of giving people that sympathetic, mutual understanding which is the only basis for true and lasting friendship. Literature is one of these vehicles, but even more effective is the film". Pope Pius XI said the same thing in other words in his film Encyclical more than twelve years ago. We are glad that the message has gone home.

To an unusually satisfactory book, the Director of the British Film Institute, Oliver Bell, adds a Foreword. He pleads for a more adult attitude to films on the part of the producers and looks forward to the day when a Chair of Cinematography in one of the British Universities "can work out in still greater detail a basic philosophy of the film, the universal art form given to mankind by the 20th century, age of applied science". With those sentiments the founders of this Review are in full agreement.

J. A. V. B.

### REVIEWS

N. B. In order that we may expand this column, editors of all reviews having as aim the betterment of the cinema are begged to exchange publications with us. Our foreign correspondents are also asked to bring to our notice any publications of interest.

LE CINÉ-AMATEUR. Paris, 8, rue de la Michodière, 1er.

Among the large number of French periodicals is one which we recommend to amateur cineastes who wish to be abreast of innovations in technique, of the activities of clubs in Paris and the Provinces, and to be informed as to the developments of the Cine-Federations. It is "CINÉ-AMATEUR" and is a monthly revue, founded in 1930, the Editor of which is Pierre Boyer. and which is actually the official organ of F. F. C. C. A. (Fédération Française des Clubs de Cinéma d'Amateurs) and of UNICA (Union Internationale du Cinéma d'Amateurs).

SIGHT AND SOUND. London. British Film Institute. 164 Shaftesbury Ave.

Each number of this excellent quartlerly contains articles of special interest on the aesthetic, cultural and social aspects of the cinema, contributed by competent personalities of varying tendencies and points of view. This imparts a character of free discussion which is valuable. Among others, Father Burke has been enabled in this way to clarify the attitude of the Catholic Church with regard to films. In the Autumn number, (1948, Vol. 17, No. 67) we find, among other things, an interesting report of the cinema in Palestine, an article dealing with production in Denmark, an article by Fred Zinneman, the director of THE SEARCH, an S. O. S. for Television, and, as usual, an excellent bibliography.

LA REVUE DU CINEMA. Paris. Gallimard.

Likewise intended for those who are more interested in the aesthetic aspect of films, La Revue du Cinema, a monthly under the direction of the

distinguished author and screen-writer, Jean George Auriol, brings together a group of the better French film critics as well as a number of foreign contributors. It publishes remarkable studies on the tendencies of certain directors sometimes comparatively unknown to the general public. In the 16th number, there is an essay on the work of Rune Hagberg, a young Swedish cineaste, by J. R. D. Debrix.

FILMS ET DOCUMENTS. Paris, rue Ducouëdic.

All who are interested in educational and documentary films will be glad to know of this monthly review, published by the French National Federation of the Educational Film. Besides various articles, it contains numerous practical instructions and notices on educational films. This secular publication evidently makes objectivity one of its main preoccupations.

FOCUS: A Film Review. London. The Blue Cottage, 69, Sumner Place Mews, London, S. W. 7.

"Focus", A Film Review replaced Catholic Film News as organ of the Catholic Film Society in January, 1948. Each month this little book publishes excellent film reviews by its panel of priest reviewers. In addition, Catholic Film Society news, articles, a column devoted to educational films and a monthly profile of an interesting film personality complete this review which has succeeded in gaining the confidence of the industry.

FILM ET FAMILLE, Lille, 9, Place de la Bourse.

This unpretentious bi-monthly review of the Film et Famille Association is worthy of attention from all who realise the need to organise Catholic family circles for action towards a worthy cinema, in the form of support for certain films and the holding of discussion groups for the formation of the public. Detailed reviews of the films shown in the region (Northern France) should be helpful to parents in the choice of suitable films for their children.

THE ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science Philadelphia, U. S. A., November, 1947, Special edition on "The Motion Picture Industry".

The very fact that the American Academy of Political and Social Science devotes a special number of its Review to the cinema should be enough to catch our interest. But the value of this number, consisting of 25 articles by the most eminent American specialists, lies in its content. Particularly interesting is the chapter on the effects of film, which devotes an article to the religious aspect. This has been entrusted to a clergyman belonging to one of the Protestant sects and therefore lacks the broad vision which only a truly Universal Church can have. The result is that even correct ideas lack autho-

CAHIERS FRANÇAIS D'INFOR-MATION. Paris, Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement, Direction de la Documentation. July, 1948. Special number on the French Cinema.

In a more limited framework, this special pamphlet on the Cinema, a Government publication, contains an interesting documentation on the different French cultural cinematographic institutions.

VITA E PENSIERO. Milan. Piazza S. Ambrogio, 9. April and May, 1948.

We can quote two important articles published in the April and May, 1948, editions of the Italian review VITA E PENSIERO, as proof of the growing interest taken by Catholic intellectuals in the cinema. The first, from the pen of the well known Italian scholar, Father Agostino Gemelli, O. F. M., has as subject Filmology, A New Science, and it tells of years of research devoted by the author to the establishment of a definition of the nature of film as an art. The second, on the relations between The Cinema and Society, is by Enrico Fulchignoni, a young Italian sociologist who is deeply interested in the problems posed by the cinema.

Read,

Discuss,

Support the

### INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

Number Two will appear in April 1949

with a Special Message from His Eminence Cardinal Suhard,
Archbishop of Paris,
and a series of remarkable articles by French writers dealing with the great
problems of the Cinema

Among others, there will be contributions by the following personalities:

Abel Gance, Marcel L'Herbier, Maurice Cloche, Jean-Georges Auriol, Pierre Leprohon, André Bazin, Jean Morienval, Lo Duca, Pierre Gérin, Pierre Michaut, as well as special interviews by Michel de Saint-Pierre with François Mauriac, Daniel-Rops, Henry Troyat, Henry de Montherlant.

In addition, numerous reviews from other countries including articles from Leo Lunders (Belgium), Diego Fabbri (Italy), Jose Maria Cano (Spain), Jose Lopez Henao (Columbia), W. H. Fenn (Great Britain), Marc Franziskus (Luxembourg) etc., as well as our customary features.

\*

Number 3 (July) and Number 4 (October) will carry in the same way, special articles dealing with the *British* and *Italian* cinema.

\*

We shall do our best not to disappoint you.

Help us in our task by means of:

Constructive criticism; Regular contribution; Efficient propaganda; Fervent prayer.

